‘Are they ready to fly?’

‘Flying faculty preparedness and professional learning – an exploratory study of transnational education staff perspectives.’

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Abstract

The international mobility of higher education institutions and courses is increasing exponentially. In 2016–17, there were 707,915 students on UK degrees outside the UK with 1.6 times more students now on UK degree programmes offshore than there are international students based at universities in the UK. They are referred to as ‘glocals’ – students having global aspirations with local experiences. Transnational education takes a number of forms, one of which involves UK academic staff working as ‘flying faculty’ offshore. This requires a tutor flying to a host country, delivering the programme of study intensively and then flying out, returning to the awarding institution in the UK. This study examines the impact of these short-term teaching sojourns by staff and their ‘lived lives’ at the pre-, during- and post-delivery stages. The study investigates what training or preparation takes place and whether the challenges and opportunities of undertaking the work of flying faculty affects them personally and/or professionally. There is also consideration of their future development needs. Six staff from two universities were interviewed as part of this research using the biographical narrative interpretive method (BNIM), supported by a focus group of twelve participants originally involved as part of a project supported by the Higher Education Academy. This wide demographic provided a significant representation of the sector with flying faculty experience ranging from zero to fifteen years. Conclusions which evolved from this study are authoritative since they emanate from experts in the field, with participant samples identified as typical. Results demonstrate that preparation and on-going support for this pedagogical practice is ad hoc, informal and of uncertain design leading to significant apprehensions for staff. A lack of focus by UK higher education institutions on the personal and pedagogic needs of flying faculty subverts any Maslowian aspirational achievements. In spite of continuing rapid growth in this area of education, there is no structured training, development or support for those staff involved. The intention of this study is to provide a starting point for higher education institutions to move forward, encouraged by regulatory, fiscal and personnel incentives. The design of personal and pedagogically structured preparation, support and development for flying faculty in the future would represent a positive paradigm shift in the way that flying faculty are prepared, developed and perceived. The results of the study should be recognised as a contribution to knowledge engendering the need for change.

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However, this thesis would not exist without the participants who took time out of their busy schedules to share their experiences of the unique world of 'flying faculty'. Each participant has influenced this study in some way and I am grateful for their shared stories, wisdoms and insights. I hope that I have captured the essence of their work in this discrete field of education and highlighted the challenges which they continually face.

Chapter 1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding and reliable insight into the impact on individuals working as flying faculty away from home, delivering intensive programmes of study offshore and what preparation and/or support is, or should be provided in this specialist area. The focus is on the practical aspects and impact on these academic practitioners working in higher education, their preparedness for the task and their professional learning. They are often referred to as 'flying faculty' – they fly into a host country, deliver module(s) or programmes of study in a short period of time over weekends and evenings and then fly out, returning to the awarding institution in the home country. These activities can be very demanding on both the institutions and the staff concerned as they are often required to deliver a comparable programme content, student experience and study hourage to that of the UK campus-based programme in line with the agreed validation requirements and regulations. Bennion and Locke note that:

> These trends bring increased expectations of academic staff: to be more highly qualified, international in outlook, dynamic and useful to the wider society. They also appear to lead to greater differentiation in academics' work roles and activities…, Bennion and Locke (2010, p.S8).

Whilst other methods of transnational education are deployed, the focus for this study will be specifically on the categories which involve some face-to-face teaching and learning in-country by flying faculty. This may be by intensive delivery in a restricted period of time as a stand-alone model, or as part of a flexible learning provision.

A review of the literature available raised a number of issues which formed objectives as the basis of this research. These are:

1. What examples can be found from a sample of higher education institutions, of training and/or preparation for staff who engage in transnational education as flying faculty?
2. What are the challenges for staff in delivering transnational education as flying faculty through intensive modes of delivery?
3. In what ways does the experience of working as flying faculty affect the staff involved personally and professionally?
4. What future development needs are required for flying faculty staff?

Since it is suggested by a number of authors such as Altbach and Knight (2007), Bennion and Locke (2010) and Healey (2013), that the trend in increasing transnational education and delivery of UK programmes of study offshore will continue in the future, this research will investigate answers to questions posed specifically in relation to flying faculty. As long ago as 1998, the UK was designated as the largest provider of offshore or transnational education (Bennell and Pearce, 1998). According to Altbach and Knight (2007, p.290):

> The international activities of universities dramatically expanded in volume, scope, and complexity during the past two decades. These activities range from traditional study-abroad programs, allowing students to learn about other cultures, to providing access to higher education in countries where local institutions cannot meet the demand.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) provided transnational education data for 2007/08 indicating nearly 200,000 students studying on UK transnational education programmes with 1,536 of these programmes in delivery. This development has continued from these early figures with published data recording some 408,685 students studying for UK higher education qualifications offshore during 2009-10 (Ziguras, 2012). According to

HESA statistics the increase in the numbers of these transnational students studying for UK degrees is pronounced, overtaking the number of international students studying in the UK. Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate this change, firstly from 2007 until 2012 and then from 2012 until 2017 with the emphasis of place of study for international students, with a year on year increase in the numbers wishing to study in their home countries as opposed to on campus.

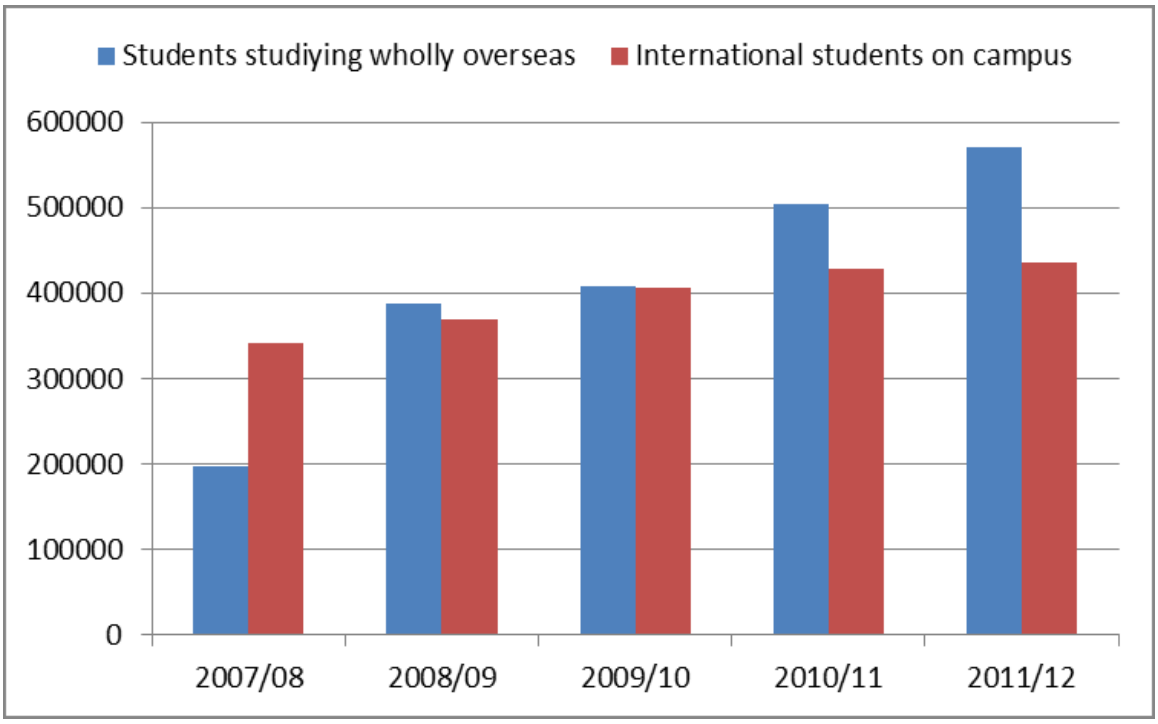

Figure 1: International students on-campus vs studying wholly overseas - Source: HESA, 2012

Whilst this may be through various methods of distance learning and study, a proportion will involve some face-to-face tuition by way of flying faculty. However, it would seem that regardless of the significant growth in students, as identified from the figures, there has not been the expected response in respect of increased staff development which has been highlighted as a necessity by many authors and researchers in this particular field. Yet, it is easy to see a natural connection with these increases in student numbers and the number of experienced flying faculty required to fulfil these teaching roles. The Global

Alliance for Transnational Education (GATE, 2000) estimated that demand for transnational education in Asian countries alone, excluding China, will rise to more than 480,000 student places by 2020. It is clear that there is a constant and significant increase in UK offshore provision of course delivery. This trend is clearly demonstrated in Figure 2 with figures for international students studying for UK higher education awards offshore more than double that of international students studying on home campus in UK.

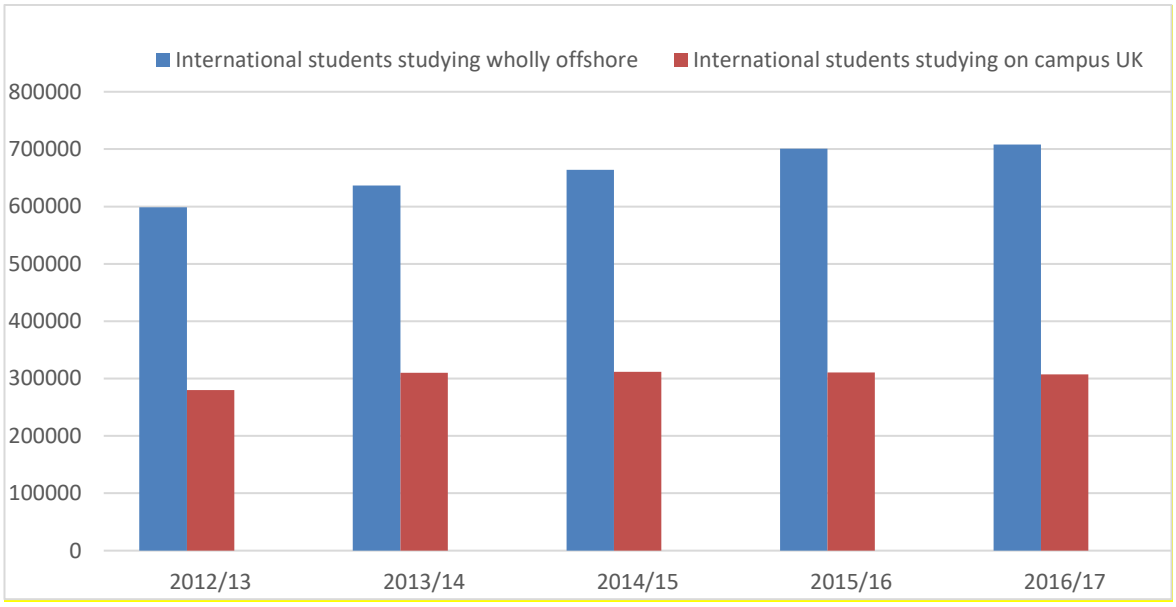

Figure 2: International students studying on UK campus vs international students studying wholly offshore – Source HESA 2018

A UK government higher education White Paper '*Higher Education: 'Putting Students at the Heart of the System'* (June 2011), aimed to respond to current domestic and international student demand in higher education and also enable greater diversity of provision. It is clear that the traditional model of government-funded institutions has been in decline in recent years with a commensurate requirement for higher education institutions to refocus, based on political and fiscal pressures, thus accelerating a shift from an 'elite' to a 'mass', to a 'universal' education system, and providing one that is more market-responsive

in the process Trow (2005). It is recognised that demand for UK higher education is growing worldwide. In his speech at the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conference in 2012, David Willetts then Minister of State for Universities and Science, stated that:

> … increasingly, emerging economies want to educate their students at home, and the UK – a global pioneer in developing educational facilities – is well placed to help. We not only have strengths in teaching and research but in design and construction of universities, mobilising finance, curriculum development, qualification, accreditation and quality assurance… This is one of Britain's great growth industries of the future' (2012).

The international mobility of higher education institutions and courses on a large scale is a relatively novel phenomenon, yet becoming a key feature of the globalisation of higher education, with growing numbers of internationally mobile programmes operating as tradeable services. Student demand for western degrees has been fueled by rapid integration of emerging countries into the global economy (Scott, 2000), (van Damme, 2000). The Centre for Higher Education Research and Information (CHERI, 2010) notes that higher education has had to become more responsive and attentive to increasing competition, both national and international. The situation was exacerbated by the initial introduction of UK government capping of student numbers studying in the UK at higher education institutions, coupled with restrictions caused by the UK Border Agency (2008) on visa approval by way of a points-based system.

Although these restrictive practices have since been changed and/or relaxed, the initial activity assisted in fuelling the speed of change necessary for higher education institutional survival and the enthusiastic participation in delivery of award-bearing university programmes offshore to circumvent these barriers to student recruitment. This enthusiasm has been heightened as a result of the

potential effects of Brexit on EU student recruitment. Additionally, although the political climate in the west generally appears to be cooling on globalisation, there is the reality that worldwide educational globalisation is continuing and accelerating. Institutions therefore must seriously consider building their futures on a long-term global strategy for transnational engagement (Dunseath and Hall, 2016).

Provision of educational programmes to students in their own country is now a market responsive activity correlating with the demands of country and student consumers and thus fulfilling a fiscal and practical necessity both for the in-country student and the UK higher education provider. Choudaha (2014) writing in the Higher Education Network for The Guardian Professional refers to these students as ‘glocals’ – global aspirations with local experiences. These are students who are willing to pay for their educational experience whilst remaining in their home country or region. He goes on to note that UK and Australia have been pioneers in transnational education, with nearly half of all international activity for the UK undertaking delivery of educational programmes through transnational or offshore provision.

Reflected in these market requirements is an urgent need to satisfy a variety of consumers, whilst at the same time providing appropriate quality control. Where flying faculty are concerned this is clearly at the point of tutor delivery. The UK Prime Minister’s Initiatives (PMI 1 1999) and (PMI 2 2006), provided additional and significant motivation to move into this area of UK higher education export. It was seen by the UK government as a key strategy aimed at securing the UK"s position as a leading player in international education. From the data

provided, it would seem that there is a global demand for UK higher education, for students who either wish to stay in their own country or who do so of necessity. Campbell and van der Wende note that:

> There are no complete, reliable data on the numbers of students receiving education in their home country from foreign providers but such information as exists, both statistical and anecdotal, suggests that they are likely to be substantial and are growing (Campbell and van der Wende, 2000, p.11).

While this may not be seen as completely convincing, as a future projection based on evidence available, it has some merit and is noted in the HESA data available in Figures 1 and 2 previously. Indeed, in a conference paper delivered for the Higher Education Academy Special Interest Group, and based on HESA data, Healey (2013, p.4) notes that:

> the number of students studying wholly overseas with UK Higher Education Institutions has grown by 190% in just five years, to 571,010 by 2011/12. International (non-UK) enrolments on campus also grew by 27% over the same period, to reach 435,230 by 2011/12. The faster growth of TNE numbers meant that, from 2009/10, there have been more students studying for UK degrees wholly overseas than on UK campuses.

The Fielden Report (2013) notes that UK universities are increasingly active internationally and for a variety of reasons. Their motivations among other things may be simply to provide opportunities to increase the numbers of institutional partners for research collaboration, or to increase income generation through widening the range of international students to include those who either do not want to travel or cannot afford to travel to the UK to further their studies. Their learning necessarily would take place in a different country from that of the awarding institution.

This group of students relies on some form of transnational education to fulfil their aspirations. The report goes on to note that the number of UK universities

and colleges launching transnational education ventures internationally is expected to increase dramatically in the next decade with these new ventures including operations in emerging economies as well as the more mature higher education environments. It is relevant to the work undertaken by flying faculty that classroom-based face-to-face teaching is highlighted as the preferred choice of learning by both employers and parents in these emerging markets (Dunseath and Hall, 2016). Additionally, the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) (2014) reports that the UK is a leading provider of higher education in a global market with transnational education an important element in internationalising UK higher education and enhancing the UK's education portfolio.

Fielden (2013) also noted that such international partnerships are planned as part of an institution's strategy, usually in selected countries. The 2013 BIS Report noted some 63 institutions as having active transnational programmes or involvement. Indeed, according to the same report, transnational education revenue of UK institutions was estimated at £496 million in 2012/13 with International Branch Campus adding a further £140 million. It would therefore seem that this micro activity of flying faculty delivery has a macro financial impact for the UK. Dunseath and Hall (2016) highlighted some 24,000 higher education degree-granting institutions being recognised by the world's national accreditation and licensing authorities. Following this growth rate profile as noted in the last 5 years, these numbers are expected to increase to over 35,000 by 2030, with student numbers demonstrating a commensurate increase reaching 300 million also by 2030. Thus, according to Dunseath and Hall (2016), higher education is designated as one of the world's significant growth

industries per capita and also fiscally. This demonstrates why an increasing number of universities are motivated to gain a share of this rapidly growing market that is transnational education.

The character and composition of international students wanting to study undergoes changes that are repeated throughout history and are true of todays' 21st century student. Universities are required to change also; to provide courses that satisfy the needs of a variety of students especially mature students and life-long learners. At postgraduate level particularly, both on UK campus and offshore, there is an increasing proportion of students who are professionals, undertaking study on a part-time basis, while balancing demands of family, work and their studies (Curtis, 2000). Delivery of part-time courses on campus is something that has been available for a significant number of years, but there are a number of aspects for consideration in being able to deliver a part-time course transnationally offshore, the most practically significant being: how will the course be delivered and what preparation and personal development will the tutor need? It would seem that this is an area which has constantly been neglected by higher education institutions.

The thrust of 'internationalisation', globalisation', establishment of international hub campus' and a wealth of offshore partnerships are seen as taking precedence in strategy and policy documents for most universities as exemplified in Figure 3 below. The commentary is taken from three randomly selected universities' web pages and is self-evident of the aspirations of these institutions and others.

HE Institution	Document	Aims noted:
UCLan: University of Central Lancashire	Strategic Plan 2015-2020	• The University strategic aim will be innovative and entrepreneurial in order to maximise our positive …… impact …. globally • We will provide international students with access to cutting-edge UK higher education • We will invest in the development of international partnerships and collaborations
University of Leeds	Strategy 2015-2020	• To maximise the University's international reach and influence, ensuring that the impact made by our education, research and alumni community is globally relevant.
University of Wolverhampton	Strategic Plan 2016-2021	• We are a global university • Our international presence includes 5 international Regional Offices and Educational Advisors in over 40 countries • Our range of activities abroad includes teaching, research and consultancy • Working with international partners we will further develop our global presence

Figure 3: Sample of commentary from randomly selected Universities' web pages with reference to their focus on internationalisation and globalisation

Research undertaken by HE Global (2016) found that a number of universities prioritised transnational education in their international strategies since they believe that increasing student numbers is the main focus for transnational provision alongside increasing income and enhancing overseas reputation. However, the basics necessary to make these aspirations effective and successful are often ignored. There are also issues of quality control in compliance with the home and collaborative universities' policies and regulations as well as the UK Quality Assurance Agency mandates for this type of delivery. Whilst of some significance, this issue of regulatory compliance will not be discussed here, the focus being on the staff who are required to implement quality control of academic programmes at the point of delivery.

My interest in the particular area of transnational education, that of programme delivery by flying faculty, stemmed initially from being a professional practitioner working as a member of a team of flying faculty staff for several universities. I observed the growth in numbers of staff being required to undertake this work who actually had little background or experience in this particular mode of providing higher education internationally. From a personal perspective, I also became involved in delivering more and more programmes offshore working with other flying faculty academics and delivering a number of papers as guest speaker at conferences and also providing workshops for those involved in transnational delivery. Consequently, I developed some thoughts, ideas and understanding of what I believed was involved in this particular work, but wanted to gain a clearer understanding from a more objective perspective gained from focussed research. Thus, in line with Oakley's comment that, "Academic research projects bear an intimate relationship with the researcher's life" (Oakley, 1979, p.4), my particular interest was firmly established and I wanted to find out more.

An initial difficulty was that research in this area tends to focus on transnational education generally with the different facets and methods used to facilitate it making up the whole, with flying faculty seen simply as a part of this general educational provision. This causes some initial research difficulties, since a good starting point for me is always to seek out appropriate 'definitions'. However, since there is no template, no mandated style, a mass and variety of methods within the UK and internationally, there is "widespread confusion concerning the definition of transnational education and its associated terminology" (Adam, 2001, p.40). In fact, Knight and McNamara (2017) note

that there is a state of confusion about what transnational education includes and that there exists a terminology chaos which urgently needs a common classification. A simple definition of the general principle of transnational education suffices and suits the purposes of an introduction to this particular study: “where Higher Education is delivered across national borders it has come to be called ‘transnational education’ or in some cases ‘off-shore’ education” Campbell and van der Wende, 2000, p.11), although Adam notes that:

> “transnational education is a subtle and complex phenomenon. Much of it appears remote from traditional education as it takes place outside the traditional sector in terms of its promotion and transmission, (Adam, 2001, p.40)

In other words, it is seen as different, remote, complex and non-traditional. The practical difference between traditional, which may be year-long or semester-long, and the intensive method of delivery required to deliver a module of study offshore is illustrated in figures 4, 5 and 6. In the traditional year-long delivery, most full-time students will enrol and study 3 or 4 different subject modules each year; part-time students, often 2 or 3.

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
2-3 HOURS PER WEEK	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
		S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T

Figure 4: an example of traditional year-long delivery of a single Module of study with a September or October start. L = Lecture; S/T = Seminar or Tutorial

Again, in semester-long delivery, most full-time students will enrol and study 3 or 4 different subject modules each semester; part-time students, often 2 or 3 as illustrated in Figure 5.

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4-5 HOURS	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
		S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T

Figure 5: an example of traditional semester-long delivery of a single Module of study with a September/October or January/February start. L = Lecture; S/T = Seminar or Tutorial.

For delivery of modules by flying faculty offshore, intensive delivery of the same modules is required to be delivered in a shorter period of time, condensed by time limits but not by content or individual student learning and development. Only one subject module is delivered over such a period of time although four modules can be delivered each year. As can be seen from the example in Figure 6, the days are long and need to be filled with varied tasks and learning activities to retain student interest, attention and a sound learning environment and attitude.

DAY	SAT	SUN	MONDAY	TUE	WEDNESDAY	THUR	FRIDAY	SAT	SUN	MON
TIME	13.00 TO 21.30	09.30 TO 18.30		18.00 TO 21.30		18.00 TO 21.30		13.00 TO 21.30	09.30 TO 18.30	18.00 TO 21.30
ACTIVITY	LECTURE SEMINAR WORKSHOP GROUPWORK PRESENTATIONS			LECTURE SEMINAR WORKSHOP		LECTURE SEMINAR WORKSHOP		LECTURE SEMINAR WORKSHOP GROUPWORK PRESENTATIONS		ASSIGNMENT SURGERIES

Figure 6: an example of intensive mode of delivery of a single module of study

Most students taught by flying faculty in this way, will undertake three or four Modules each year as part of a rolling programme with October and February starts.

In Figure 7 the modules are denoted as A, B, C and D. In this method of delivery, Cohort 1 undertake their modules in the normal order of: A followed by B, then C and D at different times scheduled in one academic year having started their programme of study in September.

COHORT	SEPTEMBER	NOVEMBER	FEBRUARY	MAY
1	A	B	C	D
2			C	D
	A	B		
3	A	B	C	D
4			C	D
	A	B		
5	A	B	C	D
6			C	D
	A	B		

Figure 7: an example of an intensive mode of delivery offshore rolling programme

Cohort 2 undertake modules C and D as their first two modules following a February start, followed by modules A and B as their third and fourth modules, which are then taught alongside Cohort 3 as they begin their programme the following September. On successful completion of each diet of modules (based on a 15-credits per module system), totalling sixty credits, the student gains a

postgraduate certificate. A further sixty credits successfully completed provides a postgraduate diploma and successful completion of a dissertation provides a masters qualification. The programme continues to ‘roll’ in this way, thus maximising the number of students and minimising the number of deliveries. A similar structure can be provided for an undergraduate programme also. There are a variety of examples of intensive provision, but the principles are the same.

Whilst being effective from a timed delivery and staff resource perspective, there is little room for dalliance or shortfall in tuition. The tutor needs to be skilled in designing the programme to achieve successful goals. The style of delivery needs to be completely different from traditional delivery of a module, where there is the absence of pressure and intensity of time. For the academic and the student, the face-to-face teaching and learning is intensive. The days and evenings are long with the majority of the students engaged in full time employment during the week. The whole concept of design, delivery, interaction and fostering understanding of new knowledge and principles, by necessity is a different model to the traditional methods that both students and tutors would normally expect. It is clear that without any previous experience, understanding or expectations, this work can be extremely challenging, especially when having to deal with the additional criteria of a different country and a different culture.

The figures demonstrate just one example of flying faculty delivery – there are many. Following appropriate induction to UK methods, training and teaching observation it is possible to involve in-country staff in some of the delivery or post-delivery support, but this does not replace the quality control provided by UK qualified tutors. Depending on the method of delivery selected, the time for

delivery can vary. It depends largely on the individual UK institution's validation criteria and the host country's educational regulations and requirements. This facilitated flexible delivery does have the advantage of accommodating the working lives of both the offshore tutor and students. Additionally, it is important to consider the fact that the face-to-face contact with the UK higher education institution's academics, heightens the perception of studying with the particular UK institution for a UK degree and probably why, for them, it will always be preferable to distance e-learning programmes. It should also be remembered though that academics working as flying faculty are also responsible for UK onshore activities which pose additional challenges to their work and life (Jais et al, 2015).

The changing composition of the student cohort and recruitment strategies to counter falling UK-based student numbers, has resulted in a number of consequences. Universities reacted to innovate and develop new methods of delivery of offshore courses to fulfil the needs of this new style of student consumer, staff, university and any collaborative partners. It results in a whole new world for academics who may have been comfortably attached to traditional lecture/seminar sessions delivered over semesters or academic years, not expecting such radical changes to their work patterns in their career lifetime. Individuals may not be willing to accept that they are novices in teaching in transnational education when they have many years of experience teaching in their home country (Deaker, Stein, & Spiller, 2016).

Without any knowledge of other teaching methods by experience or observation, there can be the assumption that there is only one way to teach

subjects generally; it is what takes place in schools, colleges and universities as a known pattern and style. However, the “biggest obstacle to innovation is thinking it can be done the old way”, and no other (Wetherbe, 2001, p.3). To require significant changes to work patterns and teaching styles from what is perceived as the ‘norm’, needs support, time and understanding of the resultant impact on the individuals concerned (AVCC, 2005). The purpose of this study is to provide a focused investigation of current staff preparedness from a personal and professional perspective at the pre-, during- and post-delivery stages and what development needs are required for staff working as flying faculty. As a framework to guide this study I have focussed on addressing the following research objectives:

1. What examples can be found from a sample of higher education institutions, of training and/or preparation for staff who engage in transnational education as flying faculty?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities for staff in delivering transnational education as flying faculty through intensive modes of delivery?
3. In what ways does the experience of working as flying faculty affect the staff involved personally and professionally?
4. What future development needs are required for flying faculty staff?

Data gathered for the study required a varied group of participants as the impact on individuals, depending on their individual profiles can be quite different. This study seeks to enhance understanding of what intensive teaching for transnational education offshore is, the different forms it can take and the specificities of intensive modes of programme delivery by flying faculty. It also

examines if, and to what extent lecturers are prepared for and manage this new pedagogical challenge and their acclimatization to flying faculty teaching. The concepts, issues and findings presented in the following chapters will seek to address these points.

Chapter Two defines and locates the current status of transnational education within the context of this study and provides an overview of the research done to date highlighting key published literature as evidence. Themes and concerns that are recognised are: the training or preparation currently provided for staff, the challenges and opportunities they face, whether it affects them personally and professionally and what if any are the staff development needs of this discrete yet ever-growing community of educators known as flying faculty. These issues have largely been ignored in favour of a general higher education presumption of staff ability to easily transfer traditionally-learned delivery techniques to intensive delivery of programmes of study offshore. Certainly, it would seem that the ways in which this pedagogy has been influenced by presumptions rather than actual understanding has been both understated and to a point neglected. The challenges faced by staff are noted in the following report:

> Research literature suggests there is a range of teaching challenges in the delivery of TNE. There is however little empirical evidence regarding the extent to which such challenges are felt by staff… (Higher Education Report, O'Mahoney, 2014, p.4).

This was a significant report written for the Higher Education Academy and substantially validates the need for this study. A number of authors, articles, reports and conferences have highlighted the challenges faced by flying faculty staff, though they are predominantly none-UK. Debowski (2003) and Jais et al

(2015) discuss the challenges facing Australian flying faculty and Clark and Clark talk of the difficulties encountered of teaching offshore by USA staff. There is significantly less attention paid through UK literature on the subject. Whilst some senior figures in higher education may be aware of the commentary to date on this topic, the eloquence of those continually highlighting the issues it would seem, has generally remained unheard since there has been no effective change or action taking place to remedy the situation. It is worth noting that the same Higher Education Report (2014) highlights the fact that three-quarters of UK higher education providers have some form of transnational arrangements in place.

Chapter Three outlines the ways in which my professional philosophical positions and different approach to research within this discrete area informed my choice to undertake a qualitative approach to pedagogical practice and experiences in this field. Data was collected by way of narrative interviews and the use of an opportunistic and interactive focus group as a forum of experienced practitioners to articulate perspectives of the current status of transnational education and preparation of the educational practitioner.

An emphasis on pre-, during- and post-delivery of such educational programmes of study offshore transnationally and intensively by flying faculty is a focus of this study. Data was drawn from six participants' interviews, three each from two post-1992 universities and based on the biographical narrative interpretive method (BNIM) interviewing style and taken from 2013 to 2014. The data thus gathered was supported by additional data from work undertaken with a focus group of higher education academics from across the country, meeting

as part of the working/focus group from 2013 to 2014 and in collaboration with the Higher Education Academy (HEA), where I was invited to act as lead for the data-gathering meetings (HEA: Good Practice Guide, 2014).

The analysis and findings of the data gathered are presented in Chapter Four. Here the qualitative data, from both the noted sources examine specifically the impact on individual academics working as flying faculty. This was done from a personal, pedagogical and educational practitioner stance. There are examples of varying importance to the participants in their brief but recurring "lived lives" as flying faculty (Wengraf, 2011, p.406). It demonstrates a picture of uncertainty, educational self-reliance, pedagogical risk and a lack of consideration and understanding as to what the role of the academic flying faculty really entails. As a group of educators, those staff involved in this work are largely unprepared to meet these challenges.

I am aware from my own experiences that higher education institutions' systems, whilst not constraining the development of the more innovative pedagogical practices as required for intensive modes of delivery, do not proactively support them either. Informal mentoring or *'learn-as-you-go',* often the norm for this activity, is not conducive to sound educational practice. This would not generally be countenanced within a UK higher education institution, where either a Post Graduate Certificate in Education or membership of the HEA are becoming more and more a mandated requirement for tutor employees.

While such preparation for staff working on campus in the UK is to be applauded, providing both professionalism and developmental support, there is no comparator for flying faculty. Instruction in teaching and learning techniques required for intensive teaching design, development and modes of delivery required by flying faculty in their challenging roles working offshore are not addressed. It can be an exciting opportunity to gradually develop into an expert in this field. Alternatively, it can affect others adversely who, whilst prepared to attempt the task to the best of their ability, experience some unnecessary trauma along the way or as Mezirow (1991) refers to them, disorientating dilemmas.

This thesis concludes in Chapter Five in recommendations and conclusions, outlining possibilities of a contribution to knowledge by a community of practice approach as noted by Keay et al (2014) or promotion of a more structured approach to pedagogical design for delivery by flying faculty offshore. Institutions need to be mindful of the need for continuing professional development for staff involved in transnational programmes and also that “staff working in TNE arrangements need tailored professional development” (Keay et al 2014, p.260). The chapter also examines the implications and limitations of the study and suggests recommendations for future development and practice and also possible continuing practical aids and/or solutions for consideration.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide a review of the literature devoted to the topic of flying faculty preparation, challenges, opportunities, both professional and personal and development needs required for success. A number of authors have highlighted the issues involved to a greater or lesser extent, each with a slightly different focus. Gribble and Ziguras (2003) looked at pre-departure training, Leask (2004) focussed on the offshore teaching team, Dunn and Wallace (2006), on Australian academics' preparedness and experiences, Gopal (2011) preparing for cross-cultural teaching and Jais et al (2015) who deal with the work-life balance of flying faculty. However, Smith (2012a; 2012b) seems to be one of the few researching in this field from a UK perspective.

As will be seen, a significant amount of the research undertaken in this area emanates from Australia which along with the USA and UK make up the top three providers of transnational education to offshore students and therefore a fertile ground for research in this subject area. Kevin Van-Cauter, HEA at the British Council, commented on the preliminary findings of a research report on the impact of transnational education on host countries, noting that there were large gaps existing in the available data and called for stakeholders involved to improve the evidence base for transnational education generally (2013).

As a first step in initiating the research, for a review of the literature around the subject, I conducted a search using key words: *'transnational'*; *'offshore'*; *'flying faculty'*; *'intensive'*; *'accelerated'* and *'block delivery'*. Each country has different descriptive titles and it was necessary to search under a variety of key words to

provide the widest scope for consideration for a literature review. Articles, reports, texts and conference papers were then collated and grouped to identify the obvious and aligned themes in the literature and finally to highlight what has not been considered to date and what also provided most information in relation to the nature and purpose of this study. The literature varies chronologically, but since this is, and has been, a developing phenomenon, all remain extant to aid in the understanding and explanation of the study.

The first stage of the literature review was to identify suitable sources of bibliographic data based on the different issues and aspects specifically relating to flying faculty as a style of transnational education. There was found to be a wealth of literature on different forms of condensed or intensive delivery with Davies (2006) undertaking a review of intensive formats, Finger and Penny (2001) reviewing different modes of delivery and Wlodkowski (2003) providing an overview of accelerated learning for higher education. Serdyukov (2008) looked specifically at the whole concept of accelerated learning but not necessarily restricted to a higher education context. Additionally, there was the useful examination by Seamon (2001), in his thesis on a comparison of the instructional effectiveness of intensive and semester-length courses. However, such research tended to be focused on on-campus provision and usually from Australian and USA writers.

There was a limited amount of literature available on the different aspects of tutor preparedness and development. Most research and policy literature published has focused on either government regulation of trade in education services (GATE, 1999; McBurnie and Ziguras 2001), quality assurance

processes for transnational provision (Quality Assurance Agency, 1999; 2014; van Damme, 2000; Ziguras, 2001) or management of transnational programmes at the institutional level (Banks and McBurnie, 1999). The demand for Western degrees has fuelled rapid integration of emerging countries into the global economy (Scott, 2000; van Damme 2000). Thus, it has become clear in recent years that academics need to deliver new skills and to be supported in this development to fulfil this growing need. It is not automatic. More recently there has been an increase in scholarly articles and conference papers to investigate and evaluate some aspects of this developing phenomenon, but again, they are quite limited.

The literature available is written from a variety of perspectives and more often than not dealing with this pedagogy from an ‘operational’ or ‘student learning’ perspective rather than ‘delivery’ which facilitates the learning. It is a fact that most higher education institutions focus on the strategic internationalisation of the institution and global market opportunities. Whilst being interesting, the information gathered from these sources needed to be sifted and selected to suit the discrete area of research aligned more specifically to delivery of transnational education, flying faculty specifically and the necessary intensive modes of delivery required by this method of teaching and the preparation of staff to deliver. Analysis of the writings of Johnson (2003), Gribble and Ziguras (2003), Gagnon and Collay (2006), Gopal (2011) and more recently Healey (2014; 2015) have provided some insights as part of this study. However, to date, an in-depth analysis from a significant and personal perspective has not been undertaken, though Smith (2009; 2012a; 2012b) and Gribble (2003) provide a glimpse into some of the pertinent aspects involved.

I believe that research on flying faculty as a facet of transnational education can assist in contextualising the whole issue of flying faculty and the commensurate problems and issues, including benefits and burdens encountered by these academics within the context of their work. This necessitates a brief look from a macro perspective at some of the regulatory definitions of transnational education which guide the UK higher education institutions as well as an in-depth investigation into the micro perspective of those academics who are involved in it day to day. In this way it is possible to identify the true impact from a personal and professional perspective on the individuals involved as flying faculty.

2.2 Definitions

As a preliminary exercise reading the literature relating to the macro concept of transnational education, I found that it was quite difficult to make comparisons, as each country and/or continent has a different understanding and definitions within their own educational regulatory framework, as do the various higher education institutions, both in the UK and offshore. Since this study focuses particularly on the delivery of UK awards and the academics responsible for delivering them offshore, it is important to at least mention the UK regulatory parameters of transnational education within which these individuals work. Two definitions of transnational education that are particularly comparable and worth noting are:

i) the definition of transnational education provided by the Council of Europe:

> All types of higher education study programmes, or sets of courses of study, or educational services (including those of distance education) in

> which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based. Such programmes may belong to the education system of a state different from the state in which it operates, or may operate independently of any national education system (Council of Europe, 2002, p.12)
>
> thus providing a sound base to site the activity of flying faculty, and

ii) the key definition of transnational education provided in the Report –

> 'Transnational Education and Higher Education Institutions: Exploring Patterns of HE Institutional Activity' (2008) produced by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, (DIUS) which has been non-operational since 2009:
>
> Transnational education refers to the delivery of educational programmes, award or credit bearing, by Higher Education Institutions in countries other than their own (DIUS, 2009, p.4)

The key words and phrases from the above extracts above are:

i) "*types of higher education study programmes….. in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based",*

and

ii) *"delivery of educational programmes ... in countries other than their own"*.

A more recent definition which supports these quotes and referring specifically to UK universities and programmes comes from HESA:

> TNE students are learners studying a higher education degree programme which leads to a UK qualification but is based in a country outside the UK, UK International: Trend Analysis of HESA data (2018, p. 5).

This provides a good fit for what flying faculty are actually required to do.

However, across the sector and amongst academics generally, there are

differences in understanding exactly what is meant by transnational education provision per se. Data collected as part of the research for the DIUS Report identified ten models of transnational education provision:

i) in-country/flying faculty
ii) distance learning (DL)
iii) blended delivery
iv) on-campus provision overseas
v) validation
vi) articulation
vii) franchise
viii)joint award
ix) dual award
x) partial credit (DIUS, 2008, p.28)

Higher education institutions in the UK choose, use, adopt or adapt one, some or all of these definitions to suit their particular 'International Strategy' or 'Strategic Plan', the result becoming institution-specific. Adam argued that transnational education was "an under-researched and often misunderstood area, with no common understanding, definition or approach" and that while some good reports on the topic existed each of these stressed "the lack of availability of hard statistical data" (Adam, 2001, p. 4). This results in difficulties in developing a common theme or reality of activity taking place across the sector as a whole and cause problems in understanding and communication between organisations.

Healey, (2014) illustrates this issue in table format, Figure 8, in his conference paper for the HEA, highlighting the difference in GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) terminology and the transnational education variant. He uses the term 'mode' to denote 'style' or 'type' as denoted by the GATS terminology as opposed to 'Model' used in the DIUS report above. Essentially, they mean

the same and are illustrative of the points made above with reference to definitions and interpretations.

GATS TERMINOLOGY	TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION VARIANT
Mode1: Cross-border supply	Programme mobility: distance or on-line education
Mode 2: Consumption abroad	Student mobility
Mode 3: Commercial presence	Institutional mobility: • International branch campus • Franchise • Validated partner
Mode 4: Presence of a natural person	Staff mobility

Figure 8: Terminology variants – GATS and Transnational Education (Healey, 2014)

A number of these models can involve some flying faculty face-to-face tuition to a larger or greater extent depending on the design of delivery for the agreed programme. It is an institutions choice. However, it is worth noting that:

> for programmes delivered to part-time students, 'flying faculty' from the home campus or elsewhere, visiting for one to three weeks at a time, is a common low-risk strategy (Dunseath and Hall 2016, p.8).

The most common and largest sector of transnational education is through a variety of in-country partner arrangements by the host country organisation with awarding institutions from the home country. It is important to note that any UK degrees delivered, assessed and awarded come under the ambit of the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). Section 2 of the QAA's Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education, states:

> The Quality Code covers …..all providers of UK higher education operating internationally. It protects the interests of all students, regardless of where they are studying (QAA, 2015, p.3).

The same code also notes that:

> Staff development (or mentoring/supervision) may be required if staff from delivery organisations who are less experienced in delivering higher education are to become involved in formative or summative assessment. In these cases, degree-awarding bodies ensure that appropriate training, briefing and mentoring is provided on an ongoing basis so that those involved are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities and to ensure that assessment is robust (Indicator 15, QAA, 2015, p.32).

This is a useful regulatory framework and commentary, particularly Indicator 15, which suggests that such programmes should involve experienced or specially trained staff, who demonstrate competence to deliver and assess such programmes of study. The same code also provides a definition of flying faculty as an arrangement whereby a programme is delivered in a location away from the main campus (usually in another country) by staff from the degree-awarding body, who also carry out all assessment (QAA, 2015). This study will not encompass these regulatory requirements, but it is interesting to note that Appendix 2 to this Code provides a glossary of terms and highlights the fact that:

> The meanings and usage given to words differ from one organisation to another and from one country to another. This is a source of actual and potential confusion (QAA, 2015, p.42).

Whilst adherence to a UK quality code as provided by QAA is useful, especially when discussing the delivery of UK degrees offshore by flying faculty, there is often a compromise required by either the host country partner and their own particular in-country educational regulations and mandates, or indeed the UK awarding institution or professional body. Thus, given the growing size of the

transnational education market, it is clear that an agreed terminology and a commonly understood typology: an agreed international glossary, would be of benefit to all parties. It would be an aid to defining the parameters of responsibility and therefore quality control. However, in more recent developments of flexible learning approaches to meet partner demands, Healey notes that “the boundaries between the neatly pigeonholed types of transnational education are breaking down and becoming blurred” (Healey, 2015, p.15).

The literature available is written from a variety of perspectives and more often than not focussed on this pedagogy from an ‘operational’ or ‘student learning’ perspective rather than ‘delivery’ which facilitates the learning. It is a fact that most higher education institutions focus on the strategic internationalisation of the institution and global market opportunities:

> Almost all HEIs that commented plan to increase the number of TNE programmes, subjects, countries and students. The number of programmes, subjects, countries and students are all set to rise according to four out of five HEIs (80%). This suggests that the appetite for UK TNE is not plateauing, and overseas markets are not saturated (HE Global, 2016 p70).

Whilst being interesting, the information gleaned from these sources often focusses on the macro approach, although the forecast rapid expansion evidences the urgency of developing appropriately trained staff to facilitate these new markets. To ascertain the parameters of researched information available on this topic I needed to investigate what was currently available, sift and select pertinent literature to suit the discrete area of research aligned more specifically to the actual delivery of transnational education and particularly flying faculty activities.

2.3 Objectives of the literature review

For the purposes of this study, the literature is viewed from the perspective of gaining information available relevant to the objectives of the research as found in Figure 9: to find, evaluate and assess prominent literature to address these specific areas.

Objectives:	**Literature Review Sub-heading number**	**Objective Focus**
1. What examples can be found from a sample of higher education institutions, of training and/or preparation for staff who engage in transnational education as flying faculty?	2.3.1	Preparedness of academics for offshore delivery
2. What are the challenges and opportunities for staff in delivering transnational education as flying faculty through intensive modes of delivery?	2.3.2	Challenges and opportunities of intensive delivery
3. In what ways does the experience of working as flying faculty affect the staff involved personally and professionally?	2.3.3	Personal and professional impact on staff as a result of working as flying faculty offshore
4. What future development needs are required for flying faculty staff?	2.3.4	Flying faculty staff development needs

Figure 9: Research objectives and particular focus for the literature review.

Objectives 1 investigates the current standard of training/preparedness, as noted in the literature, for academics working as flying faculty. Objective 2 focuses on teaching by intensive modes of delivery per se and as a flying faculty tutor offshore. Objective 3 investigates commentary relating specifically to impact on staff personally and professionally in their role working as flying faculty and finally,

Objective 4 provides an investigation of the literature to identify any sources relating to future development needs for staff working as flying faculty offshore.

2.3.1 Objective 1: preparedness of academics for offshore delivery

A number of authors have highlighted the issues relating to preparedness of flying faculty to a greater or lesser extent, each with a slightly different focus. Gribble and Ziguras (2003), writing from an Australian perspective, acknowledge that little has been written about teaching and learning for offshore programmes. Their research was based on interviewing twenty academics from three Australian universities who travelled two or three times a year for an average ten days each time. Interestingly, they found that none of the participants involved in the survey had received any formal pre-departure training though they had attended some workshops which they described as quite basic. What they did note as valuable was the informal briefings and mentoring which took place pre-departure. Whilst this may work to accommodate academics' busy schedules, the authors noted that formal recognition of the importance of this process is important and should be practised effectively and routinely. This research at least demonstrated that significant steps are needed, though it was undertaken through what may be seen to be a 'safe' participative group of interviewees.

Responding to a significant increase in offshore enrolments, some 41% of all international education for Australia, Dunn and Wallace' (2006) research provides an overview of academics teaching transnationally. Their study involved participants from nine Australian universities covering their teaching experiences, professional development, induction, orientation and professional development needed to support their delivery of programmes of study offshore

as well as the pertinent literature. It is significant that the researchers note generally that university quality processes and measures have not kept pace with the rapid development of transnational education in the country. This does not align with the standards in: 'Provision of Education to International Students: Code and Guidelines for Australian Universities' (AVCC's, 2002, pp7-8) which notes amongst other things that universities should "ensure that staff are well prepared for overseas assignments and visits". In support of this, Leask (2004) notes that specific intercultural professional development is needed for those who teach offshore and advocates that international perspectives are included in both teaching methodology and curriculum, structure and organisation of courses delivered offshore. Her research may not be so directly applicable as it also included delivery to students both on and offshore.

O'Mahoney (2014) in her report for the HEA notes that there was recognition that:

> staff needed specific training: one respondent explained that his HEI increased staffing levels "to allow shadowing and team teaching for new UK and local staff to assist their integration into the programme". Another explained they deliver CPD for flying-faculty with a focus on the softer skills, such as being aware of cultural boundaries, students' learning styles, family [or] peer pressure, etc, and another that they introduce "a peer observation and mentoring programme" (p.34).

While this may be seen as increasing staff costs, it is a sound investment considering the potential challenges faced by staff working internationally. In fact, to achieve the heights of self-actualisation promulgated by Maslow (1943) through the levels of physiological, safety, social and esteem needs, there has to be structured institutional support to engender success in this particular

activity. Dunn and Wallace refer to some nine universities within their study and note that:

> the most prevalent view appears to be that there is a range of skills, competencies and attitudes needed by those who teach in international settings and that cultural inclusivity in curriculum and pedagogy are highly desirable (Dunn and Wallace, 2006, p360).

This study by Dunn and Wallace (2006) is a useful one, investigating the experiences of academics working in transnational settings with the target group made up of those who already had experience of travelling to other countries to teach. The research was undertaken using survey methodology so that a wide demographic could be included and involved some 61 academics, 24 females and 37 males, ranging from associate lecturer to professor levels and 1 to 13 years of tenure. They all had experience to a lesser or greater extent of teaching offshore. Whilst the breadth of responders was useful, the fact that the information gained was by written survey would not, for me, provide the opportunity to really connect with the individuals and the personal responses, which could otherwise lie hidden. However, it does provide a starting point and indicates that at least there is some interest and this is not simply an area of transnational education that is being ignored or simply lying fallow.

The universities involved in the study by Dunn and Wallace (2006) sent their experienced academics to teach transnationally, and so, rather like the research undertaken by Gribble and Ziguras (2003) the research participants could potentially affect the responses and therefore the results, since there provides little balance with those staff undertaking this type of work either for the first time or early on in their careers as transnational deliverers. The main

information Dunn and Wallace (2006) were seeking was based on: how do they deliver the offshore programmes, what preparation and professional development is provided for them by their university currently and also for the future.

The respondents in the Dunn and Wallace (2006) research, highlighted a need for local information, maps, knowledge of education systems, teaching environment and local workplace scene, which all seem to have been lacking. A general response suggested a lack of knowledge of the culture(s) of the country they were working in but this issue was not followed up to any degree. In line with a few others researching in this area, Dunn and Wallace (2006) provided strong evidence that very few of the respondents were offered pre-travel preparation before travelling offshore to teach. They note that their learning was from self-experience and interaction with other experienced academics working in the same role.

Smith (2009) highlights transnational teaching experiences as an under-explored territory for transformative professional development, but suggests a reliance on the idea of self-reflection as an aid to lead to personal professional development for the offshore tutor. Whilst this may be a useful and valid point, reflection seen naturally as a development tool for teaching, provides insufficient preparation as a model for offshore preparation of an intensive course. Smith (2009) also notes that offshore teaching challenges an academic at every level. Smith (2012a) also notes that since staff find themselves suddenly immersed into an environment and culture totally different to their own

that any initial interactions are likely to engender culture shock which can result in either negative or positive experiences.

Although such experiences can initiate transformational learning, this can have an adverse effect on the work and lives of these individuals and is not something that should be a first step on the pathway to becoming a successful member of flying faculty. There is an age-old saying: *'fail to prepare; prepare to fail'* and it is sage advice in any venture and especially one that is new to those involved. Gopal, writing from a Canadian perspective, notes that: "many faculty members do not receive sufficient preparation to teach students from diverse populations" (Gopal, 2011, p.373). Gopal also asks the question:

> if they *(academic staff)* are not prepared to teach in a cross-cultural, globally diverse setting, then how can they provide an equitable educational environment for their students? (Gopal, 2011, p.374).

As part of her research, Smith (2012a) interviewed five British male lecturers within one institution, all relatively senior and having worked in higher education for some time with significant experience as working as flying faculty. Smith admits to the restricted demographic noting that the sample number was small and all male and:

> while it is representative of the types of people who engage in flying faculty teaching within the case institution, it cannot be seen as representative of the higher education sector more generally (Smith, 2012a, p14).

However, it had validity in highlighting issues not previously addressed. Smith's subsequent paper (2012b) notes that when asked about institutional support for flying faculty work, the common response is a resounding 'No'. It would seem that almost a decade after Gribble and Ziguras (2003) noted limited pre-

departure support for flying faculty and the significant increase in student numbers during that time, that support is still not available or part of mainstream provision by the UK higher education institutions. Neither it would seem is there any post-visit debriefing to assist in future learning for new staff embarking for a first flying faculty visit offshore. Other comments agreed that the institutional support for them as flying faculty was missing, and since they tended to work as lone members of their UK institution any snapshot learning from the brief, intense sojourns working offshore could be lost, with their institution failing to learn from such cumulative experiences.

The consensus from the literature to date seems to suggest a lack of acknowledgement by higher education institutions that there are also obligations on the institution to ensure staff are adequately prepared for the challenges that they face. It is a conversation with which they seem not to have engaged to a significant level. The support for the endeavours of the individuals who are key to such financially lucrative activities are perceived simply as an ideal for the organisation and an aspiration for the staff involved. Gribble highlights shortcomings in this area:

> … universities will need to heighten their level of attention to the preparation of lecturers in transnational programs to ensure the quality… (Gribble and Ziguras, 2003, p215).

2.3.2 Objective 2: Challenges and opportunities of intensive delivery

When referring to working offshore as flying faculty, teaching often occurs in "short intensive bursts which require lecturers to be meticulously prepared" (Gribble and Ziguras, 2003, p.211). At the beginning of this study there was found to be a wealth of literature on different forms of condensed, accelerated

or intensive delivery. Davies (2006) comments from an Australian perspective, undertaking a review of intensive formats of programmes delivered in short periods of time and both Wlodkowski (2003) and Serdyukov (2008) provide a view of accelerated learning but rather from the student perspective for higher education in USA. This, along with the useful examination by Seamon (2001) in his thesis on a comparison of the instructional effectiveness of intensive and semester-length courses indicates that intensive delivery of educational programmes has been a norm for over a decade. What their research does demonstrate is the changing demands of the students and their requirements of educational delivery and thus the staff in their methods of teaching.

Whilst the emphasis in this study is focussed on the flying faculty tutor, the preparation of materials, style and schedule of delivery has to consider the type of student they encounter in their sojourns offshore. It has been noted that students undertaking the intensive modes of delivery, recognised as a necessary format for flying faculty, tend to be older, Caskey (1994), more motivated, Christy (1991) and better prepared, Smith (1988), and thus, more likely to succeed regardless of the length of tuition and study mode involved..

An early example of intensive delivery was short-term summer courses taught at Harvard University in 1869 (Seamon, 2004), yet it is still perceived as *'new'*. Indeed Berlitz (1898) made the change from conventional classes to a *'total immersion'* intensive programme of study in the 1950's which at the time caused some consternation in academic circles, but proved to be successful. More recently, Davies notes, intensive modes of delivery seems to be an idea "whose time has come" (Davies, 2006, p.9). However, currently, this

phenomenon is seen generally as being little to do with pedagogy, but more to meet the needs of the student clients and collaborative offshore partners in a fast-changing world. Also, as a way of providing new markets and fiscal opportunities for UK universities. There is a need, more than ever, to *'get educated'*, but to be able to do it faster, better, in fact, intensively, so that it can then be put into effect to the benefit of individuals, employers, companies, governments, nations and globally. It needs to be *'of the 21st century'.*

Universities have an international agenda to a greater or lesser extent, yet the staff expertise, knowledge and experience expected to fulfil the demands of these institutional aspirations are not always given the same focus and attention required by staff employed to deliver on-campus programmes. It is worth noting that the student cohort, on campus and offshore now has different demands that have developed gradually over the decades as noted in Figure 10 (Oblinger, 2005). It is important to ascertain that the delivery methods have kept pace with these changes. Whilst the analysis provided by Oblinger is more than a decade ago, it is still extant. Additional forecasting by me is indicated in the adapted Figure 11 looking at the Neomillenials perspective.

Oblinger (2005) notes that students are different now than thirty, forty or fifty years ago, whether UK-based or a member of one of the host countries involved in flying faculty delivery of UK award-bearing programmes. More students have time to study as life-long learners. Today's recruited cohort of part-time students, particularly postgraduates, are different to full time undergraduates. This requires consideration in the development and delivery of teaching materials and styles.

	"MATURES"	"BABY BOOMERS"	"GENERATION X"	"NET GENERATION"
BIRTH DATES	1900–1946	1946–1964	1965–1982	1982–1991
DESCRIPTION	*GREATEST GENERATION*	*ME GENERATION*	*LATCHKEY GENERATION*	*MILLENNIALS*
ATTRIBUTES	Command & control Self-sacrifice	**OPTIMISTIC** **WORKAHOLIC**	**INDEPENDENT** **SCEPTICAL**	**HOPEFUL** **DETERMINED**
LIKES	Respect for authority Family Community involvement	Responsibility **WORK ETHIC** **CAN-DO ATTITUDE**	**FREEDOM** **MULTI - TASKING** **WORK - LIFE BALANCE**	Public activism **LATEST TECHNOLOGY** Parents
DISLIKES	Waste Technology	**LAZINESS** Turning 50	Red tape Hype	**ANYTHING SLOW** **NEGATIVITY**

Figure 10: Extract from *'Educating the Net Generation'* (Oblinger and Oblinger, 2005, p. 29)

It is interesting to note some of the differences in the age profiles described by Oblinger in Figure 10. Whilst this study is not focussed on the student perspective, it is important to have some consideration to the student audience when designing and developing the course of study and materials. It is even more important a consideration when looking at delivering transnational programmes intensively. The key to success is having knowledge of the audience in receipt of the educational programme studies. Hénard, Roseveare et al (2012) note that:

> Internationalisation of programmes entails refining support for students and paying closer attention to students with ever more demanding expectations in terms of quality of pedagogy, student assessments and the learning environment (2012, p. 8).

As indicated in Figure 10, students generally as well as those requiring a transnational education course delivered intensively in their own country would generally fall into the category of Baby Boomers (just), Generation X (more likely) or the Net Generation (highly likely). Highlighted in bold blue capitals and underlined are key attributes, likes and dislikes which would be assets to an individual undertaking any such intensive study. Whilst it could be seen as a somewhat over-generalised set of criteria, the terminology is relevant to the general trend of learning preferences. Oblinger's net-generation are portrayed as hopeful, determined independent and sceptical yet optimistic workaholics who like the latest technology, freedom, multi-tasking and a work-life balance centred around a good work ethic and can-do attitude. Noted also is a dislike of laziness, negativity and anything slow. As such, generally they would demand more options than traditional, semester or year-length teaching formats, something which generally is not considered in the

traditional delivery timetables assembled year on year in higher education institutions.

Today's educators, "need to possibly move beyond the traditional modes of instruction" (Ali and Ho, 2006, p.1). Supporting this idea, Kelly and Pohl in their INTED (International Technology, Education and Development) conference paper (2015) note that: "The 21st Century University Classroom will require an innovative high impact collaborative learning environment that promotes multiple means of interaction..". They also note that It is the 'Neomillenials' that drive today's classroom whether it be online, face-to-face or a hybrid of the two.

Today's students see teachers more as facilitators whose classrooms function seamlessly, yet currently typical online, hybrid and face-to-face courses offer the student few opportunities for high impact collaborative interactions (Kelly and Pohl, 2015). Oblinger's Figure 10, demonstrates the changes to students' profiles that have occurred over the last century. I believe that since these categories were designated, another category can be added which reflects the next generation of student, Figure 11 emphasising even more how intensive teaching fits the life-style better. In fact, the change of delivery style to intensive, for the student and the tutor, is so significantly different to their 'norm', that the addition of diverse cultural aspects simply magnifies any problems.

	"MATURES"	"BABY BOOMERS"	"GENERATION X"	"NET GENERATION"	"NEOMILLENIALS"
BIRTH DATES	1900–1946	1946–1964	1965–1982	1982–1991	1991-present
DESCRIPTION	*GREATEST GENERATION*	*ME GENERATION*	*LATCHKEY GENERATION*	*MILLENNIALS*	*TECHNO-SOCIALLY RICH*
ATTRIBUTES	Command & control Self-sacrifice	**OPTIMISTIC** **WORKAHOLIC**	**INDEPENDENT** **SCEPTICAL**	**HOPEFUL** **DETERMINED**	**DRIVEN** **OVER-LOADED**
LIKES	Respect for authority Family Community involvement	Responsibility **WORK ETHIC** **CAN-DO ATTITUDE**	**FREEDOM** **MULTI - TASKING** **WORK - LIFE BALANCE**	Public activism **LATEST TECHNOLOGY** Parents	Social networking **WWW** **RELEVANCE OF STUDY TO WORK** **STRUCTURE**
DISLIKES	Waste Technology	**LAZINESS** Turning 50	Red tape Hype	**ANYTHING SLOW** **NEGATIVITY**	Waiting **NO PARTICIPATION IN LEARNING**

Figure 11: Extract from *'Educating the Net Generation'* (Oblinger and Oblinger, 2005, p.29), adapted Whieldon 2016

Tutor-led delivery of a programme of study offshore is the preferred style of the student-consumer (British Council report, 2012). It has to be intensive. Time is of the essence and there is little room for error. Peters (1998) notes that intensive modes of delivery can provide more opportunities, especially to international students, to use new terminology in their own language when undertaking group work. From different cultural perspectives it helps to limit frustration and potential embarrassment. It is a fact that studying in a second or third language over intensive days of study can be exhausting. As Peters (1998) notes, groupwork as a method of teaching, encourages individuals' active participation, helping to negate any initial lack of fluency in more technical English. Delivery methodology is crucial to the success or otherwise of intensive modes of delivery. A number of authors have commented on different aspects of this.

Ramsey notes that:

> An intensive subject can greatly enhance learning in that it creates a special pedagogical environment where the teacher is able to teach students for an entire week, with ideas and arguments developed and analysed systematically over a period of days (Ramsey, 2011, p.96)

Johnstone and Percival (1976) note that for intensive modes of delivery, lecturers who adopt a varied style of delivery, deliberately interspersed with illustrative diagrams, activity sessions or indeed any form of deliberate break, command better attention from their group. Scott (2003) notes that in relation to certain instructor characteristics, students wanted instructors to use effective teaching strategies and demonstrate classroom creativity through incorporating a variety of teaching methods promoting motivation and interest, a principle with which I can agree. Her research also indicates that students felt that without creativity and variety, intensive

courses could easily become monotonous, an idea echoed by a number of researchers.

It has become clear in recent years that academics need to develop a different style of teaching and skills set to deal with the demands and challenges of intensive full days programme delivery. In fact whilst their writing is not focussed on higher education teaching, I am impressed by Gagnon and Collay's, article (2006), articulating a constructivist approach to "designing for learning" rather than planning for teaching, a principle which is transferable to any situation involving the need to engender an interested and motivated approach to a learning situation. It is the teacher/tutor who has control of this activity of learning, even more so in an intensive delivery, offshore situation. Such a constructivist approach would be a good template or guideline for flying faculty and is easily adaptable to any subject area or curriculum. The six elements of: i) situation, ii) groupings, iii) bridge, iv) questions, v) exhibit, and vi) reflections provide the sound structure to provoke teacher planning and reflection on the process of student learning (Gagnon and Collay, 2006).

As qualified or experienced teachers, we have all these *'tools of the trade',* known and available to us, yet do not always key into their use when faced with a different type of learning as required by intensive provision. Since the tutors need to be able to deliver short lectures, seminar/tutorials, workshops, group work and structured research exercises built into repeated full days delivery, I believe that the elements of constructivist learning as promoted by Gagnon and Collay (2006) would provide a sound basis for programme and materials development. However, flying faculty need to be supported in their professional

development to achieve successful outcomes for themselves, the students and the university. It is not automatic.

While writing from a self-awareness point of view, Csikszentmihalyi (1982) suggests that deep concentration and intensive immersion in an activity leads to increasingly rewarding optimal experiences. This is true when considering adult working learners' hectic lifestyles and complicated everyday experiences. Scott and Conrad (1992) also assert that intensive concentrated study can cultivate skills and understandings which would otherwise remain untapped and undeveloped under the traditional system. While theory from both of these authors may be criticised, it is echoed to some extent by Serdyukov and Serdyukova (2004) who note that by moving away from the complexities of the traditional model, learning efficiency can be increased. Although Serdyukov is discussing intensive learning and accelerated learning per se, and not particularly referring to offshore provision of flying faculty tutors, his assertion is very much to the point that:

> "the more organized and effective the instructional system, the more the student is focused, the more effort produced, the better the effect of learning, the faster rate of learning, and the shorter the process duration (Serdyukov, 2008, p.49).

It is useful to consider the differences between intensive and traditional issues to highlight specific criteria which flying faculty need to consider to be able to deliver a programme effectively as highlighted in Figure 12, (Serdyukov, 2008). Whilst this over-simplistic chart may be seen as somewhat flawed being not entirely in line with the intensive delivery required by flying faculty delivery, I believe Serdyukov (2008) provides a reasonable comparator to demonstrate key areas of difference.

		INTENSIVE	TRADITIONAL
1	Course duration	Short: 4-8 weeks	Long 15-18 weeks
2	Process	Intensive	Traditional
3	Session duration	4-5 hours	1-2 hours
4	Frequency	4-6 per week	1-2 per week
5	Structural model	Sequential (1 at a time)	Parallel (several at a time)
6	Methodology	Special	Traditional
7	Motivation	Very high	Varied
8	Engagement	Active	Varied
9	Learning environment	Special	Standard
10	Learning efficiency	Very high	High
11	Class size	12-15 students	25+ students
12	Instructor requirements	Specially prepared	No special requirements

Figure 12: Differences between intensive and traditional course delivery - adapted from Serdyukov: Comparative Features of Instructional Approaches (2008)

Point 2, process and point 5, structure are key to the development of materials and preparation of style of delivery which from the point of view of hourage, if nothing else, has to be significantly different. Key from the students' perspective are points 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 which still, however, relies on the tutor designing something which provides for the needs of the student highlighted by these points. Points 6 and 12 are of significant importance to the tutor/deliverer. If these areas are not given sufficient consideration, then intensive course success will be difficult to achieve. So, whilst lacking in mirror-image to what the flying faculty tutor has to undertake, there is sufficient to reflect some of the comparable difficulties. A minor criticism would be the change from use of the word 'traditional' to 'standard' without explanation of the term at point 9. Consistency of terminology is critical for the accuracy of research results.

In the intensive format, students have to focus on one course/module at a time rather than on several courses in the traditional model. Critically, this could be said to sacrifice depth of understanding for curricular breadth, but then the period of reflective activity by the student taught intensively can continue long after the module or programme has been completed. The duration of the intensive session can be five or more hours over one day, and sometimes even longer, compared with the traditional one to two hours each week

Significant research is found on intensive programme delivery and its allied forms and terminology. Seamon (2001), who undertook a comparison of the instructional effectiveness of intensive and semester-length courses, suggests that intensive courses appear superior to their semester-length counterparts. Clearly this is a statement that would fuel much academic debate, yet Scott (2003) also highlights the attributes of intensive courses, providing some suggestions for teaching methods. She also notes that universities seem to be less than innovative in their teaching methods, still continuing to schedule classes based on assumptions and tradition rather than solid empirical evidence. Whilst her comments may be seen as highly critical by a few educationally entrepreneurial universities, the practicalities of staff timetabling of weekly lectures and seminar/tutorial sessions and the ‘rooming’ administrators are most often the starting point for each academic year for the majority of higher education institutions.

Perhaps instead of looking at the idea of intensive delivery as a burden, tolerated for delivery of programmes offshore only and as such a frowned-on

necessity, it could be perceived as the way forward for a change in patterns of teaching and learning within higher education in the UK for the future and perhaps not just for offshore programmes. It is possible that it would accommodate twenty-first century lifestyle demands better than the current system, which exists simply through tradition. This idea is echoed by Davies when discussing intensive courses per se:

> Students now clearly require more options than traditional, semester-length teaching formats. In the current university environment, it is to be expected that universities are rising to the challenge of providing more intensive modes of delivery, and that these methods are becoming more popular. It is in this context that intensive teaching has become relevant, (Davies, 2006, p.11).

Thus, perhaps rather than being seen as *'McEducation'* Traub (1997), it could be recognised as a new way forward for delivering programmes of study in universities. It is certainly in line with the changes in student profiles as suggested by Oblinger (2005) and Davies' (2006) comments above and which together seem to deserve serious consideration.

One of the biggest barriers to the acceptance of different forms of student study and consequent staff delivery is the fact that it is considered by most Higher Education Institutions as so different to the 'norm'. The *'McEducation'* label awarded by Traub (1997) emphasizing their relationship to fast food restaurants and their alleged inferiority to the more conventional style, would seem to have done much to seize attention yet with a lack of substance. Much of the research on intensive style of delivery for the most part proves this to be an unjustified reference. An example is noted by Ho and Polonsky that:

> ..students in an information rich, high speed interaction environment might perceive learning differently than those in the past, for whom traditional modes of learning were initially designed (Ho and Polonsky, 2009, p.46)

Intensive teaching practices have a long history from a practical perspective, but research in this area is relatively scarce, (Boyes, et al, 2004). Serdyukov's radical stance that:

> "these approaches are still marginalized by the traditional educators and educational theorists who are too sceptical about innovative approaches to teaching and learning to be open and objective Syudokov, 2008, p.52),

has potential for being perceived as quite draconian, and by some as equally emotive as the comment by Traub (1997). However, it is one that is a welcome challenge to the perceived over-comfortable standardised higher education norm by the more adventurous educators. Research and investigation undertaken by Seamon (2004) evaluating short-and long-term differences in instructional effectiveness between intensive and semester-long courses confirmed that students who studied by way of intensive course delivery performed significantly better in assessments than those studying using a more traditional style of semester-length course delivery. He also noted in a previous article that: "to achieve the depth-of-processing advantage that some say intensive courses offer, experts agree that special instructional approaches are necessary" (Seaman, 2001, p.2).

Intensive teaching and thus learning, seen by a number of authors and researchers as a higher level of accelerated learning, is an attempt to raise both time and cost efficiencies of learning. In these challenging fiscal times for higher education institutions, this may not be something that is considered a priority. Seamon also advocates that: ".. intensive learning requires more effort on the part of both learners and instructors" (Seamon, 2008, p 66). Unfortunately for flying faculty, the educational focus and concomitant research has

predominantly been on the student experience without consideration for the staff preparation, skills and abilities necessary to ensure that the quality of that experience is maintained. Clearly more needs to be done in this area.

2.3.3 Objective 3: impact on staff personally and/or professionally

Szkornik (2017, p. 521) notes that teaching in an unfamiliar environment brings with it a "plethora of challenges", highlighting long and intensive teaching hours, difficulties in contacting and liaising with UK-based colleagues and language and cultural difficulties. Whilst noting the writers and their areas of specific research, there is little written which puts together the amalgam of other challenges for staff and the impact of these challenges on them from a personal and a professional level. Experiences of extensive travel, living, even if only temporarily, in a foreign country, isolation and responsibility can affect staff to greater or lesser extents depending on their individual characters, personalities and confidence levels. However, for such activities to have little or no consideration by higher education institutions for those involved in such significant activities is both surprising and disappointing. Whilst dealing with such personal issues, staff have the added task of somehow absorbing the intricacies of a pedagogic methodology in new and different settings.

O'Mahoney (2014) in her report for the HEA argues that the potential of transnational education can only be realised if attention is paid to the pedagogical practices and challenges that are often specific to teaching in an offshore context. These challenges for academics teaching offshore (Debowski, 2003), the requirement to develop specific skills for teaching in an international setting (Teekens, 2003) and lessons learned about intercultural understanding whilst teaching offshore (Bodycott

and Walker, (2000) are highlighted by a number of authors. However, there is little that is provided either by the higher education institutions themselves, or researchers involved in this work that is actual practical advice. Jais et al (2015) state that: “there is a dearth of research on the work–life balance experiences of academics who undertake short-term international teaching assignments” (Jais, et al, 2015, p.1123). Whilst literature suggests there is a range of challenges in the delivery of transnational education, it seems there is little empirical evidence regarding the challenges felt by staff, with little known about the practices that staff adopt to improve learning and teaching (O’Mahoney, 2014). This is true in a number of aspects of research and writing related to transnational education and flying faculty in particular with a particular period of enthusiasm noted 2012-15 and a noticeable sparsity since.

In July 2014, I delivered a conference paper for the Higher Education Academy at Aston University (Whieldon, 2014) dealing with the preparedness and effect on staff as flying faculty, at the pre-, during- and post-delivery stages of programmes of study. It gained some interest and provided some additional commentary by others looking at the issue from these perspectives. It not only raised issues but also highlighted difficulties not noted before, yet which had been looked at from a more holistic approach of the whole experience, by writers such as Ziguras (2007), Smith (2012a, 2012b) and Gribble and Ziguras (2003). The impact on individuals undertaking this activity lacks investigation. Ziguras notes that:

> Teaching staff from the awarding institution who travel overseas to teach for the first time often find the experience challenging. On top of the planning, preparation and logistics of teaching far from home, teachers are put into an unfamiliar learning environment in which they are the outsider (Ziguras, 2007, p.21).

Yet, the burden of success, or otherwise, lies with the skill and expertise of the tutor concerned. They are not only the deliverer, but planner, assessor and institutional representative. The benefits of transnational education as identified by UK institutions acknowledges:

> ….. increasing opportunities for academic staff to gain experience working overseas and visiting partner countries. This also includes being able to network with other international academics and creating more opportunity for collaborative research projects (Tsiligiris et al., 2018, p. 12).

BIS argues that there are “challenges we must face if we want to seize the opportunities of international education” (2013, p. 27). The challenges they list are: co-ordination between agencies, growth, visas, competition, and customer relationships. The challenge of developing the teaching competencies of staff along with an understanding of the specific learning needs of the transnational student are absent from this list, yet it is critical to the success of this style of delivery. There is insufficient evidence adduced to demonstrate the multi-faceted skills necessary to undertake this role and achieve success

Figure 13 summarises Ramsey’s (2011) findings well. He notes that tutors interviewed as part of his research felt that maximising the active engagement of the students with ideas as opposed to the passive receipt of information, provided a special learning experience. He also noted that new and interesting concepts and problems used to provoke and engage the students to rise to new challenges and formulate new ideas as part of intensive delivery results in a collaboration between the tutor and the student**.** In this way the tutor becomes more of a facilitator of their learning rather than simply a deliverer of

information. As such the “preparation, planning, design and delivery of a subject are all important in maximising the learning experience” (Ramsey, 2011, p.96). The skills and abilities needed to re-arrange standard UK semester/year-long material, delivery and style in this way are not inherent in the learning-to-teach profile required of a UK tutor delivering on-campus.

Preparation and planning – interviewees emphasised the importance of detailed preparation and planning. Where a subject is taught across an entire semester, the structure of the subject can to some extent be modified as the subject progresses. There is little scope for this to occur once an intensive subject commences
Class format – students should be given considerable opportunity for discussion by creating situations which generate debate or devising problems to elaborate the relevant issue at hand. Engagement with the reading material is greatly enhanced by injecting variety into the teaching day. A teaching day can be broken up with a mix of guest speakers, learning activities, problems and exercises
Delivery – intensive teaching requires great physical effort and can be very exhausting for a teacher
Co-teaching – one means of providing a variety in teaching methods is co-teaching an intensive subject. From an educational perspective, co-teaching can also be beneficial where each co-teacher provides a unique interpretation of the material. Having a local and international teacher allows for particular points of comparison to be made and competing arguments and theories between the two jurisdictions to be heard. Alternatively, students may benefit from competing practical or theoretical approaches between teachers or from specialised experience a co-teacher may have in the subject area.

Figure 13: Techniques used by teachers involved in intensive teaching in Australian law schools, (Ramsey, 2011, p. 96)

So, how do staff develop their skills to fulfil such aspirations? This requires a complete re-think on the design of delivery of a programme of study which, while being delivered intensively, has to match the content and learning outcomes of a twinned programme of study within the UK to maintain validity.

Ramsey's (2011) research, based on interviewing nine academics who use intensive teaching methods for law subjects in Australian law schools. noted that intensive teaching is increasing and notes four basic, successful techniques used by participants as illustrated in Figure 13. One of the key techniques noted in Ramsey's list, emphasises preparation and planning. I believe that Ramsey's somewhat simplistic table for teaching techniques is a starting point. Rather like an iceberg, it is the tip only, with a depth of variants lying hidden behind the generalisations. But it is at least a starting point, indicating some understanding and providing some basic guidelines for new flying faculty to consider. Developing new teaching methodologies, materials design and delivery with a high degree of emphasis on active learning to facilitate intensive, transnational programme delivery is the goal for those staff working and responding to new learning and teaching environments. For a number of flying faculty, their first experience of this style of teaching can be when they are actually in another country with all the additional challenges of being far away from home and academic support systems. Scott (2003), notes the lack of innovation in professional development for these teaching methods in universities. It is suggested that there is a divide between the Luddite traditionalists who are reluctant to leave the lecture podium and those ready to embrace more innovative teaching methods as required by flying faculty delivery offshore (Orsmond and Stiles, 2002).

It is essential for academics and tutors to develop a teaching style that fits intensive delivery; that benefits the students and meets their needs; that complies with quality control procedures and enhances the student learning experience providing a better fit with those students' lives and greater alignment

with their own working environment. The problem is that it could be seen as endorsing the whole concept of ‘commodification’ of education, promulgating the idea that the focus is on student output instead of meeting their intrinsic needs. This statement may have been true initially, but there have been many changes in teaching styles since the nineteenth century when intensive teaching and learning was first delivered.

It is clearly time to move on, but with understanding and knowledge rather than change for change sake. The higher education environment is undergoing rapid transformation. It is not surprising therefore that teaching methods have also been changing and universities have had to consider new ways of delivering course content (Davies 2006). However, even internationally, the amount of research on this bespoke area of teaching and learning is quite limited with authors such as Ramsey (2011), Wlodkowski (2003) and Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (2010), who actually focus on some of the practicalities, and Arkoudis, (2006) seen as key for practical suggestions for teaching strategies.

The British Council undertook a five-year study from 2007 until 2012, producing a report on their findings titled: ‘Portrait of a Transnational Education Student’, (2012). It was clearly noted in the report that students when studying for a transnational degree valued the practicality of being able to combine study with employment. They could stay in their own country, study part-time by way of intensive tuition and maintain their role as an employee and also family support, underpinning Choudaha’s (2014) notion of ‘glocal’ – global aspirations with local experiences as mentioned in the Introduction chapter.

The British Council report also noted that an important and significant quality measure for the students was the amount of face-to-face teaching involved. This was found to be especially so when students were studying for UK degrees offshore. As well as providing new knowledge within a subject area, they felt that their classes and sessions underpinned their development of English language skills, using a programme of study as a vehicle for this. It was seen as a bonus and additional to their main studies. For this reason, it is often the preferred style of transnational education for some country's institutions and is considered a better, quality product than delivery solely by local tutors or through virtual learning environments.

There is an assumption that academic staff can adapt and deliver a twelve-week module, normally made up of weekly lectures and seminars/tutorials, over a short intensive period of time, to students studying in their own country. This ranges from materials development, through all the facets of pedagogic methodology and assessment. Johnson notes that:

> This lack of research in regards to preparing faculty to teach cross-culturally in international branch campuses is surprising given that teaching faculty members are the 'primary facilitators of students' learning, (Johnson, 2003, p.22).

A relevant and pragmatic statement raising questions not just of the individual tutor, but also of their 'sending' university. Whether the tutor is delivering in an offshore collaborative partner institution or a UK university branch campus, they are still required to deliver the course more intensively than they do on the UK campus. From a personal perspective, from informal discussions while working offshore, from post-conference informal meetings, it is recognised amongst those who *'do'* as requiring a different skills-set. As indicated throughout this

study, current published research, though scant, also supports this. It would seem that there is little evidence of provision for academics working as flying faculty to develop such additional skills, other than by actual experience, trial and error, or some form of informal mentoring. What the literature would seem to suggest is a lack of strategic development for staff in an area which is significant in both growth of student numbers and financial income for educational establishments. Assumptions that tutors who can teach traditionally on campus and are experienced and can therefore teach intensively in any forum, may be based on a false premise and one which is investigated as part of this study.

2.3.4 Objective 4: staff development needs

Debowski (2003) identifies the need for professional development in a number of areas including instructional techniques and curriculum design. Enthusiasm for professional development to adapt the curriculum, to develop bespoke competencies and have better preparation and clearer guidelines for transnational teaching was also noted by Dunn and Wallace (2006). Smith (2012a) explores the motivations, challenges and opportunities that working as flying faculty affords and examines the practicalities of flying faculty as a trigger for transformative professional development. Yet we are still at ground zero for any structured staff development, formal or informal, for this increasingly important activity.

It is a fact that conversion of a traditional semester course taught on a UK campus into an intensive course for transnational delivery necessitates modifications, not only in the instructional format, but also in the methodology.

Methods, strategies and activities applied traditionally are neither as effective nor appropriate in the intensive course where instructional time may extend up to significant hourage, over week-ends and evenings, with adult students studying after a full working day. Executive policy-makers may be too far-removed from the actual nuts and bolts of delivering flying faculty programmes to empathise with the constant challenges on a daily basis and thus do not perceive staff development as an urgent pedagogical need.

There is much for the flying faculty tutor to do before, during and after a teaching visit. Amalgamating the available pedagogical principles and methods for intensive delivery, can result in the emergence of an effective style and format. The caveat is that the UK institution has to champion this activity, providing time and resources for it to flourish effectively as professional development. Presumptions that teaching is a standardised activity that is the same wherever it takes place and that academics are having significant opportunities and experiences travelling to different countries, are misplaced when the lack of preparation and professional development is considered. It is worth remembering the original Native American proverb, that warned: *'Don't judge a man until you have walked a mile in his shoes'* (undated). An adage worth remembering and when applied to academics working as flying faculty. It is only when you actually *'do it'* that understanding of what it entails emerges. Opportunities to develop new teaching methods, travel and new cultural experiences may be exhilarating. However, it should not have the penalty of what Mezirow (1991) describes as 'disorientating dilemmas' as the quid pro quo attached to it. The Australian Vice Chancellor's Committee noted that:

> Offshore teachers need particular skills, knowledge and personal attributes in order to be successful in this complex and demanding

> intercultural environment and particular types of support and development at different stages of their career as teachers of transnational programs (AVCC, 2005, p. vi).

It is surprising that in the development of intensive modes of delivery for offshore education, that the variant pedagogical techniques and experiences have not previously been drawn together to provide templates which can be developed into a more formally designed structure for pedagogical learning for these flying faculty tutors. Gribble and Ziguras, (2003) noted that while there is an increasing body of literature dealing with intensive course delivery for offshore programmes, little has been written about the teaching and learning content.

There is also a lack of *'exchange of best practice'* – an ideology which is promoted within a teaching and learning strategy of most universities. Whilst traditional delivery has been the status quo, with government changes, university 5-year strategic plans and international strategies impacting, intensive delivery could become the new norm, especially with the rise of the relatively recent phenomenon – 'the hub' or offshore campus. The ability to teach on such programmes as an effective flying faculty tutor will become essential to academic staff in higher education institutions in the UK and world-wide. Thus 'time taken' as a benchmark of success or otherwise of a course of study is not justifiable. If best practice experiences were shared and implemented across the sector, academics should and could be provided with at least basic support appropriate to their professional development for working offshore.

In the UK, the Professional Standards Framework (2006), records one of its aims as demonstrating both to students and other stakeholders alike, the significant professionalism that staff need to bring to support the student learning experience. Yet again it needs to be noted that there is still no mandate requiring some formal staff development for delivery of educational programmes by flying faculty. The framework outlines areas of activity concerning planning, teaching and assessment, scholarship and research and professional development, as well as 'core knowledge', including knowledge of the subject material, understanding of how students learn and methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching, summarised in Figure 14.

1. Respect for individual learners
2. Commitment to incorporating the process and outcomes of relevant research, scholarship and/or professional practice
3. Commitment to development of learning communities
4. Commitment to encouraging participation in higher education, acknowledging diversity and promoting equality of opportunity
5. Commitment to continuing professional development and evaluation of practice.

Figure 14: Higher Education Academy: Framework professional values (2006 p.3)

The detail noted in points 1-5 (Figure 14) take on a new significance when applied to the development needs of flying faculty. Yet they should apply equally since they are an all-encompassing professional standards framework.

Higher education institution conferences now regularly include papers written by academics who are involved in this type of teaching and delivery, providing useful insights and anecdotal accounts of particular experiences. Bodycott and Walker (2000) note that the development of inter-cultural understandings should permeate the curricula. Although a sound principle, there does not seem to be any positive practical steps nationally that are being lauded and applauded for doing so. It is not an action that can simply be achieved by the issue of a single instruction. It has to come from the development of in-country knowledge, materials development, use of appropriate teaching styles to suit. If no personal and professional development is provided by their institution, how are academics expected to achieve this? The practical answer is that mostly they find out by living through the experience, under the guise of that esoteric catch-all principle of *'experiential learning'.*

Research, studies, accounts and reports seldom provide patterns of experience or exemplars, which those tutors new to intensive modes of delivery need. What is indicated is that research on the topic identifies that intensive modes of delivery can be both a successful and effective method of delivery when used by tutors who are experienced and/or effective in this method. It can provide considerable advantages for students and staff. But, when and where do they get this experience and knowledge and what time is provided for them to do so? Developing different pedagogical approaches and innovations in teaching is an important part of educational and academic development for tutors. Institutions around the world are moving with the times, albeit at different paces. They are

using a range of modes of delivery as noted originally in the DIUS Report (2008). It is essential that academics are provided with the opportunity for specific staff development within these new areas of transnational education. A study conducted some twenty years ago and noted by Daniel (2000) found that success depended not on the time taken for delivery of an intensive period of teaching and learning, but certain key factors in the learning experience which determined the success of the experience or whether it was painful and tedious. These key factors included the following: instructor enthusiasm and expertise; classroom interaction; collegial atmosphere; student input into classroom discussions; active learning; relaxed learning environment and good organisation.

When delivering a module of study traditionally, there is less pressure on the tutor and their success in being able to comply with the factors as mentioned by Daniel (2000). Because of the time parameters of semester or year-long, there is time to ‘catch-up’ or run additional sessions, or have one-to-ones with students who need more input. To deliver the same standard and achieve the same success, as required by tutors delivering as flying faculty intensively is a new challenge. The planning, organisation, structured activities, teaching strategies and learning objectives are easier to sustain over a traditional one, or two-hour session each week than over a few days of seven, or eight-hour sessions. The demands on the tutor’s skills in those designated areas of intensive delivery are heightened to a greater degree by the longevity of the intense tuition period. If those skills have not been developed from a structured, professional perspective it may provide no more than an experience rather than true personal and professional development.

There is much for the flying faculty tutor to absorb and to do so quickly especially if they are learning by experience as is often the case. The main source of difficulties for international students is often difficulties with language. Native-speaking English undergraduates may have a vocabulary of around 40,000 words; an undergraduate for whom English is a foreign language may have 10,000 words or less (Schmitt, 2008). This of itself requires consideration in programme design and delivery allowing for a new consideration for staff for offshore delivery. For example, a subject specific programme which gradually develops a ‘glossary of terms’, with key words re-iterated in subsequent modules of study, aids communication and confidence in the tutor/student relationship.

Difficulties with language are also more likely to occur as a result of the types of language used by lecturers including the use of unfamiliar concepts, acronyms and anecdotes, especially in some discipline areas where certain types of prior knowledge are assumed (Parke, 2003). The problems of potential mismatch of communication between tutors and international students can provide a major source of different understandings and expectations of academic work (Errey, 1994). The short case study example from the Good Practice in Offshore Delivery: a Guide for Australian Providers (2008) found in Appendix A provides a good example of this. It is a true example of an Australian tutor, extremely popular with home-campus students with a particular style of teaching that is well-received by them, including a high degree of tutor/student ‘banter’. He believes his style of teaching to be dynamic and delivers his one-week programme in China in the same style. His belief is that the students love his style as they are silent and do not ask questions. A Chinese tutor observing the class has a different view: only a few students understand him;

he does not stick to the power point; he speaks too quickly; they are too nervous to respond to questions; they do not think he knows anything because he does not tell them anything, just asks questions.

Major issues for international students tend to be the relevance of the course content, course materials and the lack of recognition of different experiences, perspectives and background knowledge (Ryan and Helmundt, 2003). Their research was based around staff having to deliver programmes of study on home-campus with some 20% international students. While not focussed on flying faculty challenges specifically, it would seem that much of their commentary aligns with similar problems, notably time and financial provision to develop appropriate skills. They conclude that “teaching and learning practices can be improved to enhance the learning of international students” (Ryan and Helmundt, 2003, p6). They also pointed to the lack of training for lecturers in teaching international students as well as the need for more research in this area. If there is believed to be a lack of appropriate preparation provided for tutors who teach significant numbers of international students on home-campus, it would suggest that such a lack of professional development and support for flying faculty teaching offshore with all the additional challenges that go with it is quite justifiably criticised and should come under greater scrutiny. “Staff working in TNE arrangements need tailored professional development” (Keay, J. et al, 2014, p.259)

From my experience as a professional practitioner, international students tend to appreciate bespoke lecture and tutorial notes, involvement in group discussions, workshops, case study analysis and the opportunity to demonstrate their new

knowledge among their peers through group and individual presentations. Individuals representing the views of *'the group'* provides opportunities to put forward opinions without the fear factor of *'being wrong'* since it is the views of the group and not an individual. These simple factors, learned and honed over a number of years are not readily brought to mind for staff new to the flying faculty fraternity. So, how do tutors who have only taught traditionally gain these insights, nuances and techniques, when no specific professional development is provided by their institution? It is rather like the university presuming that since someone can drive a car, when they are provided with a heavy goods vehicle with multi-gears and rear steering, and have to drive, what for them, is on the 'wrong' side of the road, that they can do so just as successfully. What can result is more than concern on the driver's part. It can be fear, panic, and a complete breakdown of confidence. It is the same with flying faculty. A few do actually gain confidence from the experience and find it professionally exciting, but for others it can be too challenging a road to knowledge.

> The intensity of the visits, set amidst heavy workloads at home, proved physically demanding…. The impact on the physical body was not often recognised by their institution…… The flying faculty teacher's focus was mainly on surviving the intensive delivery and managing workloads at home (Smith, 2012a, p.14).

It is a fact that:

> … institutions must develop ways of supporting and encouraging the professional development of staff who teach offshore……(Gribble and Ziguras, 2003, p215).

The impact on flying faculty who have no previous experience, preparation or structured professional development, can be demoralising for staff. The first they may know of dissatisfaction would come from student questionnaire feedback and course committees, all the norm in UK Higher Education Institutions for judging the

quality of the tutor and the programme. This has greater impact when the tutor is already at a disadvantage delivering a programme in a teaching style they have not previously used, in a country and organisation which they regard as foreign. Looking at these requirements from a pedagogic perspective and all the necessary adaptations needed for intensive delivery, it is clear that there needs to be significant consideration of the development needs for flying faculty staff, from both personal and professional levels. Lamers and Admiraal (2018) argue for long-term professional development aimed at enhancing teaching quality, to be specifically included as part and parcel of a transnational education partnership. They highlight that development of effective teaching practice and a staff development programme aimed at harmonising and standardising the teaching skills of staff is essential. As a result of their study, Lamers and Admiraal (2018) note that it appears worthwhile to establish an academic development unit focusing on transforming teaching practice in line with the delivery of transnational education programmes.

2.4 Summary

From the data gathered and subsequent analysis, I will hopefully provide some insights, shared wisdoms and information not previously articulated for this growing constituency of educators. While a few writers have provided some focus on the challenges involved, this study hopes to go further in examining pre-delivery preparation, during delivery challenges and post-delivery reflection and emerging staff development needs for this discrete but indispensable growing community of practice. This overview of the literature has identified aspects of pedagogical practice required for transnational education as delivered by flying faculty and examined research in relation to the growth, development, demands and challenges involved. In doing so it has revealed

some concerns with gaps in the current research and also the current practicalities considered or otherwise of higher education institutions in this lucrative, educational niche. There is a tendency to treat transnational education delivery by flying faculty as though it is a standard pedagogy, no different than traditional UK on-campus delivery, irrespective of the impact on the participants. This has resulted in a general neglect of structured and bespoke personal and professional development of staff taking place or even being considered. The focus on flying faculty practitioners needs, experiences and practical preparation have been neglected in contemporary research and while some studies have mentioned specific challenges encountered by practitioners with reference to preparation or suggested approaches, there has been little discussion of practitioners' experiences (good and bad) or effective problem solving to eliminate potential difficulties proactively and provide development for the future.

This study will focus on the practical implications of this type of intensive programme delivery and specifically on academic staff working as flying faculty. It is something that has not been undertaken from this particular perspective before. It is hoped that through the focus on the research objectives and questions looking at staff preparation, challenges and opportunities, personal and professional impacts and staff development needs that answers will be found. A review of the literature has provided some interesting insights into the multi-faceted world of flying faculty and delivery of programmes offshore. This has enabled me to incorporate the research objectives in answering two specific questions. Objectives 1, 2 and 3 are amalgamated in research question: 1. In what ways does the experience of working as flying faculty affect the staff

involved personally and professionally? Research objective 4 is designated as research question 2: What future development needs are required for flying faculty staff? Having located this study within contemporary understandings, I now go on to present the design of the study

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical and practical aspects of the methodology, methods and analytical strategies employed within this study. This is achieved through considering my own professional and philosophical positions developed through professional practice, reviewing literature pertinent to the research and subsequent data gathered. It provides an overview of my search and final selection of methodology and also examines choices of research methods for data gathering, discussing sampling choices, demographic considerations and suitability of participant numbers, finally presenting reflections and discussion on the ultimate research method selected.

I also examine the methodological framework ultimately employed in the study, following first considerations, but changing to BNIM as an appropriate vehicle for narrative interviewing of participant staff. A final choice was ultimately settling on a hybrid of using BNIM interviewing technique but disregarding the mandated interpretation and analysis phases of BNIM which I felt was more appropriate to sociological subjects and longitudinal studies. Analysis was undertaken through deductive codifying of the data.

Following a strong interpretivist paradigm, the purpose of my research was to investigate and provide a new view or understanding to provide answers and potential solutions. Whilst understanding that there is no single answer, reality or truth in response to such research, I was overtly aware of my own ontological background aligned to the topic area, which was extremely helpful, but which I did not want to influence the outcome. However, I felt that these personal life

experiences, from an epistemological perspective, could be an aid to interpreting the reality and the meaning of the outputs from the research to a greater effect. It was important to give due consideration to the fact that teaching, by its very nature, is a personal activity. Teachers' skills "are modified by experience and activity since no two people have the same life experiences, we all learn to perceive the world and ourselves as part of it in different ways" (Nias, 2006, p.179). The tutor/teacher is a deliverer, a facilitator, a performer, educational guide and confidence provider, as well as the source of new knowledge.

The selection of a research approach to fulfil my initial perceived needs for this particular research has incurred significant amounts of reading, thought, consideration, selection, subsequent de-selection, concern and final decision-making. Extracts from my reading have encouraged a feeling of empowerment in this conscious selection. Such commentary as: "Research methods are in the service of the researcher, not vice versa. Treat rules as guidelines which you can adapt, refine, expand or trim," (Cousin, 2009, p.2), and "Good research is not about good methods as much as it is about good thinking" (Stake, 1995, p.19), a slightly dated but extant principle, have supported my view. Cousin, (2007) also notes that the scholarship brought to the research cycle and time spent thinking with the data as much as you are thinking from it, is equally important to the gathering of the data itself – previously seen in a narrower view as the main purpose of the research itself.

I needed to decide which research approach; what sample size; which method of data collection and analysis to be employed for the study, whilst bearing in

mind the subject matter and the activity involved in the accumulation of the data to produce most valid results and conclusions. I was heartened by the fact that not only does the research content evolve as the research exercise continues, but also so does the method(s) of gaining that information via the mode of data gathering. Flexibility is comforting and provides for growth of thought, position and resulting outcomes. This principle is supported by Creswell:

> The landscape of research is continually evolving, enabling researchers to study increasingly complex phenomena. Educational researchers have ……. developed novel methodologies to provide increasingly sound and complete evidence (Creswell, 2008, p.321).

This comment is reassuring to a new researcher. The journey to arriving at the destination of fulfilled research was and has been an interesting one with some useful changes of vehicle along the way.

3.2 Positioning

Sultana notes that: “It is critical to pay attention to positionality, reflexivity, the production of knowledge and the power relations that are inherent in research processes” (Sultana, 2007, p.380). As a result of their unique life-journeys, individuals have their own world-view which can either, by accident or design, affect their approach to a specific research task. The key to producing unbiased research is to limit the effect or impact of individual experiences and ontological assumptions to ascertain as unfettered approach as possible. I understood that reflecting on my positionality relative to the research study was critical to ensuring the validity of the research.

While it is not possible to be 100% objective, an important issue for me when deciding on the research method was, to try and be as systematic as possible

providing clinical rigour to the study. Gribble and Ziguras (2003) interviewed twenty staff from three universities for their research. The participants were experienced, confident, offshore tutors. A good comparator would have been to interview a mixed group including some who were undertaking the activity for the first or second time, and at a point early in their offshore careers. The resulting conclusions then would have possibly had more impact.

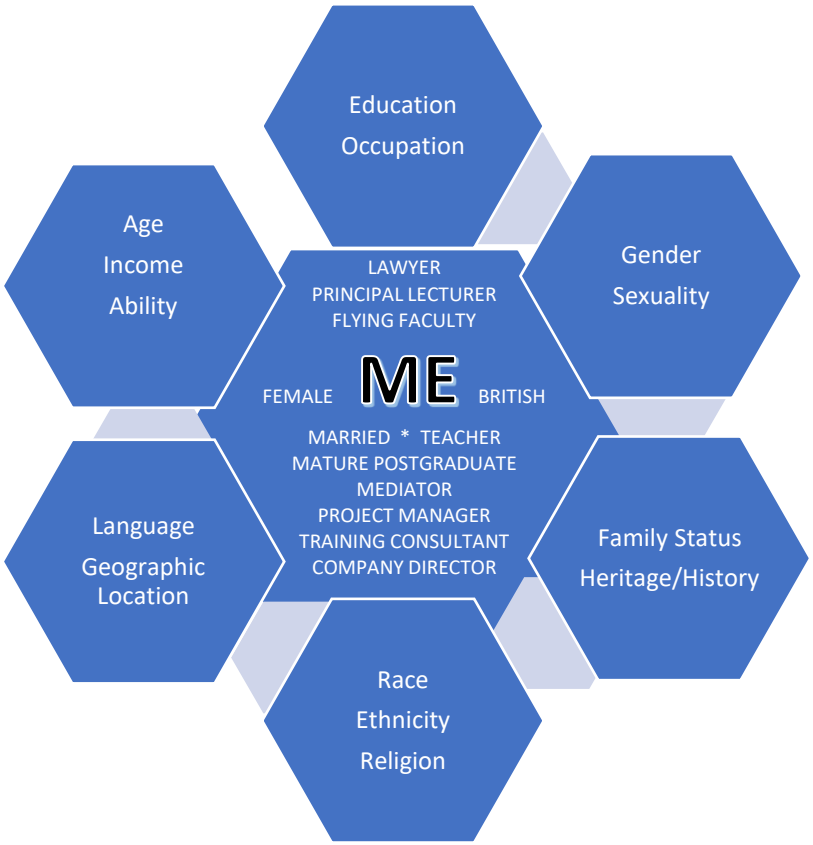

Figure 15: Examples of values and beliefs which can affect the validity or independence of a research study - positionality

Having appropriate and relevant experience of this particular area of transnational education myself, I did not want either the research data I gathered, the analysis or the conclusions to be affected in any way by my own

beliefs, experiences or values systems. There are a number of personal values and beliefs which could undermine the study for me, examples of which are shown in Figure 15. Thus, throughout the study, I made sure that I had an underlying awareness of any potential personal influences that could affect the validity of the study other than that which as a professional practitioner with specific knowledge of the experience of being flying faculty provided additional and useful information.

Initial concerns of my own experiences affecting the objectivity of my research was allayed following discussions with other researchers and my supervisors. I concluded that my experiences and knowledge were helpful in sensitising me to the issues and concepts at the heart of the study. Thus, I had an insider position with ease of access to the subjects of the study, the opportunity to inquire in a more meaningful and insightful way and sharing of common language and labels. This resulted in heightened trust, generating more honest responses to the data gathering sessions. This was important since the final amalgam of data, along with the literature review not only provided essential triangulation but sufficient data to enable me to achieve some specific answers to the research questions posed, interpret behaviours and experiences and provide and build evidence-based theory from these qualitative data sources.

The comment that: “the root source of all significant theorizing is the sensitive insights of the observer himself” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.251), provided more than persuasive argument to acknowledge my involvement in the knowledge generation process, not as a ‘contaminant’ but as a sensitising filter. My conscience was clear. I believe that it is important to note the close link

between gathering the data, the analysis and the positionality of the researcher as an informed practitioner. Hatch (2002) notes that:

> Data analysis is a systematic search for meaning. It is a way to process qualitative data so that what has been learned can be communicated to others. Analysis means organizing and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories (Hatch, 2002, p.148).

I believe that my position as an informed practitioner was an asset to the study.

3.3 Choice of research methods

Qualitative research as a method of inquiry seeks to understand social phenomena within the context of the participants' perspectives and experiences with research methods that are more flexible, responsive, and open to contextual interpretation. This is ideal for an investigation involving educational delivery by tutors in different environments and using different teaching and learning forms. Quantitative research, on the other hand provides data which uses inventory, questionnaire, or numerical data to draw conclusions and for me inappropriate for this study. “The choice between quantitative and qualitative research methods should be determined by the research question, not by the preference of the researcher” (Marshall, 1996, p.522). While this comment has some merit, I do think that an individual working in a particular area of research will have more in their contemplation than the bare questions seeking answers. What is clear is that selection is based on a number of factors including the personal preference and subjectivity of the researcher themselves.

I believe that a balanced demographic of participants was key to the success of qualitative research and for this study, some form of personal interaction by way

of interviewing: a way of providing the robust unfettered information that would enable greater validity. In addition to enabling access to complex layers of information, it also facilitates the interpretation of human behaviour and experiences based on substantive evidence, enabling theory to be built and generated from these data sources. This I felt was the very essence of what I needed for my study.

3.4 Reflection

The very interest that an individual researcher has initially, in a particular topic, sets the scene generally involving some aspect of subliminal influence. There were a number of threads highlighted in the search of the literature around the topic areas of the study based on the day-to-day activities of flying faculty and involving design, delivery, teaching style, etc., in fact all aspects of their work while offshore.

Each favoured research methodology utilised by academic and report writers focussed on specific areas of these topics. Quantitative was favoured for: how much transnational education, how many countries, students, institutions; how many flying faculty in a university, the UK, globally; delivery-hourage and schedule design to support the economically focussed fly-in and fly-out activity. Yet little qualitative research, relatively, has been undertaken on the impact of this activity on the tutors themselves. Most of this type of qualitative research emanates from Australia, Canada and USA. Their different educational systems provide both anomalies and similarities exacerbating the problem. When these are considered in the light of the UK, the saying ‘countries separated by a common language’, often quoted as emanating from George Bernard Shaw

(Readers Digest, Nov. 1942) comes to mind. Thus, the limited research undertaken from a UK perspective on flying faculty, provides little to highlight the impact on individuals or motivate university executives to recognise or address the problem in any way.

Patton notes that: “The credibility issue for qualitative inquiry depends on three distinct but related inquiry elements” (Patton, 1999, p.1190) referring specifically to issues of validity, reliability, and triangulation, all of which support the credibility of the researcher and the philosophical belief in the value of the qualitative inquiry. Unfortunately, many qualitative studies have also been used as descriptive tools to analyse diversity in populations through semi-structured interviews with a small sample and whilst currently being undefined methodologically, it is argued that most of these types of study can be described and defined as a qualitative survey (Jansen, 2010).

This is not exactly what I had in mind. I anticipated something with more substance and rigour while taking into account individuals’ experiences, personalities and sensitivities. There was also still the caveat that the lack of intensive approaches to the narrative interviews, potential influence of myself as the interviewer, sub-conscious steering of responses by any structured questions asked and their analysis could provide some shallow rather than in-depth understanding in the conclusion of the study. So, although the narrative approach is in some quarters considered as passé, I find myself agreeing with Jones who considers it to be “the bread and butter of qualitative work”, (Jones, 2004, p.96). However, I still felt that the research needed more than some form

of standard qualitative interviewing and was drawn to the process offered by Wengraf's BNIM.

3.5 Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM)

One of the results of a search within the subject matter of transnational education and research methodology, provided papers by Smith (2012a, 2012b) using BNIM as a particular qualitative research method which seemed ideal for this study. As I have already highlighted, teaching is recognised as a personal experience, and as well as having the narrative story as the basis, there was a need for the development of a mutual trust, a gradual building towards a mutual understanding of the participants' experiences in their unique situations. This could only be done through an iterative interview process where this mutual trust was established, nurtured and enhanced through a series of interviews which promoted this feeling. Thus, for me, standardised interviews with the researcher steering the dialogue with specific questions would not suffice. According to Schutze (1987) cited in Rieman (2003), p.18):

> standardised interviews were experienced as something strange by the interviewees, as something which did not have anything to do with their everyday communication and forced them into a passive role.

Narrative interviewing where there is guidance and structure provided by the interviewer at the beginning and during the course of the interview can result in too much influence exerted, however unintentional, between the interviewer and the interviewee. I was aware that since I had spent some twelve years as Litigation Manager in a law firm dealing with all court work, it was relatively easy to draft a question, either intentionally or subliminally, to gain the response

sought. I did not want that to happen for this study. It was important to elicit the truth, a clarity of expression, thoughts or opinions of the interviewees alone.

Rieman (2003) suggests an outline which started to encapsulate the basis of how I wanted to conduct my research for this study. This guide for me raised such logical key points: trust between researcher and informant; a generative initial question; no interruptions to deviate from the story line and finally follow-up questions to fill any gaps. Consequently, I felt that BNIM identified a significant and appropriate research tool to use for my study. The writings and guidance produced by Tom Wengraf (2001; 2004; 2011; 2012; 2013), along with a few other researchers working with this methodology have taken the style of narrative interviewing to another level over the last two decades. BNIM supports research into the lived experience of individuals and collectives and elicits narratives of experience rather than just explicit statements of position; asking for retrospective whole stories and particular incident experiences that have occurred historically.

Additional influence for the initial selection of BNIM as a research tool came from reading Wengraf's Biographic-Narrative-Interpretive-Method (BNIM) – A Short Guide (2004), prompted by Smith's paper (2012a). These principles were the primary ingredients for the type of research that I believed would provide the most effective insights into the discrete areas of transnational education and the work of flying-faculty, the focus of this study. An advantage of this type of qualitative research was the ability to provide a voice, a platform, for those who are often an overlooked minority and enabling in the sharing of experiences with others. A biographic narrative approach it seemed, was ideal for those who had

stories to tell and experiences to share, but with some form of analysis providing the lone researcher with the opportunity to provide some independent evidence.

3.6 BNIM Interviewing

It is noted that narrative interviews where the interviewer provides a high level of guidance and structure throughout the interview(s) can lead to a lack of self-expression of the interviewee and therefore a hazard to the next stage of interpretation and analysis of the data. However, BNIM interviews supported by BNIM interpretation and aligned procedures provides a powerful tool for research purposes and understanding subjectivity in situations.

> An increasing proportion of the studies using BNIM, deal with applied issues, exploring how professionals do or don't intervene effectively with people in difficult situations and how policy and practice should be developed accordingly (Wengraf, 2004, p.2).

While generally used, BNIM is perhaps more suited to longitudinal studies. For example, those involving retrospective whole stories and particular incident experiences, such as studies involving multi-generational families Rosenthall (1998), Brannen (2004), or organisations, Frogget and Chamberlayne (2004). It would seem that BNIM is adaptable and the subject areas for its use are expanding as more researchers seek to use this methodology. Wengraf explains:

> The BNIM narrative interviewing is one which, if followed will provide you with a whole story or long narration with a relatively large number of particular incident narratives (PINs) (Wengraf, 2011, p.102).

Johnson (2011) in her research and subsequent report for the Higher Education Academy 2010/11 used BNIM as a methodology to elicit rich data. Johnson and the HEA research team:

> were interested in how students narrate their experiences of belonging, the meaning they ascribe to their narrations and the insights these can offer our emerging understanding into the factors impacting on a student sense of belonging (Johnson et al, 2011, p.3).

She goes on to explain that BNIM has been used successfully to draw out stories and narratives from selected interviewees' lives explaining that the interview is structured so that the interviewee has the time and space to develop their narrative contribution. The transcripts are then interpreted through analyses of the living of the 'lived life' and the 'telling of the told story. From this study and also papers produced by Smith, (2012a, 2012b), BNIM as a research method has clearly facilitated a variety of educational research papers and projects and was not restricted as originally thought to longitudinal studies alone. So, with this particular study in mind, the opportunity to access whole stories and particular experiences was an attractive one.

In 2013 I attended an intensive and very interactive training week provided by Tom Wengraf on the BNIM research techniques. I had the opportunity to experience both interviewing and team analysis using these methods with the other delegates attending and this provided a useful insight into the strengths and weaknesses of BNIM. In the 'pushing for particular incident narratives' (PINS) style of the interview, as described later – it can be perceived as being over-intrusive and assertive. There is a need for high level sensitivity not only to the subject matter of the interview, but the style of assertion that is used; lack of sympathy to the effect of this part of the interview process on individuals can lead to a withdrawal from a candid gifting of detail and information needed for the relevance and validity of the data sought. Indeed, this was an event that

occurred in the training exercises with two of the course attendees discussing their particular experiences. Thus, there was need for caution.

The BNIM method interview protocol has three sub-sessions: 1) a non-interrupted initial narrative, 2) internal questioning of points raised in the initial narrative, 3) third session covering any additional points. The first interview session is introduced by way of a Single Question aimed at Inducing Narrative(s) (SQUIN) with some instructions, an example of which is provided in Figure 16. It is important to say no more than this. BNIM narrative interviewing is designed to provide a relatively coherent 'whole story' or 'long narration' generated within the first sub-session together with a large number of recalled and deepened 'Particular Incident Narratives' (PINS).

Example of a SQUIN:

"Can you please tell me the story of your life since X"

"Start wherever you like"

"Please take the time you need"

"I will listen first. I will not interrupt"

"I will just take some notes in case I have further questions after you have finished telling me about it."

Then, repeat: "Can you please tell me the story of your life since X"

Figure 16: SQUIN - Single Question Inducing Narrative (Wengraf, 2012, p.113)

These are typically and naturally inserted into the long narration by the interviewee and which sets the agenda or provides a menu for the second

interview session created by the interviewee themselves. The three sub-session structure is iterative and developmental from the research information perspective, and as a staged process, can be viewed diagrammatically as seen in Figure 17.

While the story is being told in the first session (1), as well as taking a recording, it is important to note down the topics involved in the narration and is best done by way of a special type of topic note-taking the 'SHEIOT' notepad – using the initial letters of the words: Situation, Happening, Event, Incident, Occasion/ Occurrence, Time. This is a helpful guide to create narrative-pointed questions for the second sub-session, (2). The interviewees' own words should be used in any subsequent dialogue, even if colloquial. The second sub-session (2) should ideally follow on relatively soon after the first and can perhaps best follow after a short fifteen to thirty-minute break.

During this interlude, the researcher needs to select items from the note-pad for further probing in sub-session 2 It is important to choose the first item narrated and any others strictly in the chronological order that they were raised by the interviewee and by careful use of key words and phrases – 'pushing for PINS' (Wengraf, 2012). Practical examples of pushing for PINS' are provided in Figure 18. Feelings and emotions should be avoided if at all possible while focussing on the 'SHEIOT' criteria Items raised in the first sub-session (1) can be left out, but a BNIM interviewer cannot go back to earlier items: "If you go back, the gestalt goes crack", (Wengraf, 2011, p.982).

ONE **Initial SQUIN** **Initial response/account** - facilitation but no direction or interruption - unspecified narrative questions (if necessary) - note-taking on topics for Sub-session 2	**TWO** **Narrative Questions on Mentioned Topics only** - only Topics raised in Sub-session ONE - only in the order of their raising; - only using the words of the Narrator	**THREE** **All Further Questions relevant to the Interests and Theories of the Researcher** - some topics may arise from ONE or TWO - others almost certainly will not

Figure 17: The 3 iterative stages of the BNIM interview narration after Wengraf, Training Manual 2013

Dialogue to push for PINS	**Narrative-pointed Question (NQ)**	**Feeling(s)/Emotion(s)**	**How it all happened……**	
You said: "……."	*"Do you remember :* *- anything about…..* *- any more about…* *- that particular……*	AVOID THESE IF POSSIBLE – or use to set the scene and then move back to columns 4 and 5 by using words from columns 1 and 2	Example of: - situation - happening - event - incident - occasion/ occurrence - time	- situation - happening - event - incident - occasion/ occurrence - time
1	2	3	4	5

Figure 18: Questioning for sub-session 2 interviews, based on agenda set by interviewee in sub-session 1 – 'Pushing for Pins' after Wengraf (2013)

Sub-session (2) ends with their PIN (or refusal to respond) raised in relation to the last item they originally mentioned at the end of their sub-session (1).

Following these intensive first two sub-sessions, debriefing field notes, tape-recordings made at the time of the interviews, support and supplement reflection and analysis of materials from sub-session (1) and (2), there is the opportunity for a further interview or interviews when all further questions relevant to the interests of the researcher are mooted. The first two sub-sessions are normally scheduled on the same day, while there can be at least a week and perhaps a month or so between the second sub-session and the third, since a preliminary analysis of the materials will have to be done prior to the final sub-session.

An example of this is found in Figure 19. Information provided by narration initiated from the SQUIN as interview 1 marked as SS1 is indicated in **black** type. Questions then subsequently raised sequentially by the researcher in 'pushing for PINS' in attempting to expand particular interesting areas of narrative are noted in **green** type and marked as SS2. A final interview some three weeks later following reflection on the narration and raising additional questions are noted in **blue** type and marked SS3.

Following completion of these sessions, the restrictions applied to the previous sub-sessions are set aside and communication by email and telephone is encouraged post the final sub-session 3 to ensure completeness of information. All these stages were carried out in relation to the gathering of data from the sample interviewees involved in this study to provide qualitative data.

DAY 1 morning	DAY 2 afternoon	+ 3 weeks later
SS1 Narrative as a result of primary SQUIN	**SS2** Additional narrative resulting from pushing for PINS	**SS3** Final narrative following reflection on data gathered
So in terms of all of these teaching visits we have simply learned as we've gone along. So we haven't had any training, we haven't had any kind of development for these teaching trips.	There has not been a lot of support from T & L people and they have not particularly identified training needs of individuals. The Learning Development Unit has recently halved in size. They do a Staff Development Day each Semester but they always focus on UK not overseas……	If there are any issues offshore there should be resources, technical support from the UK……..IT for example…….. a student having problems logging on to offshore

Figure 19: An example of narrative gathered from the 3 iterative sessions initiated by a SQUIN.

3.7 BNIM – Interpretation and Analysis considerations

"Qualitative data takes the form of narrative, with themes and concepts as the analytical device" (Dixon-Woods et al, 2001 p.126) which seems in the first instance to be a somewhat simplistic approach, although there is the hidden danger of falling into pure description based around the questions raised or a hypothesis being pursued. There is clearly a need for self-discipline to look at what the data is saying rather than making it 'fit' any preconceived notions. It is also important to align the information gained with the literature already reviewed thus linking relevant texts from whatever source to the empirical data. I have found that there has been a natural and constant ebb and flow between the research method, analysis and literature sections of this research. According to Cousin,

> In one way or another, all data analysis perspectives offer moves that

> achieve some form of data reduction: at one end these moves codify and segment research texts and at the other end there is an attempt to pull out emergent stories from the text within a holistic approach (Cousin, 2009, pp.32-33).

Patton notes that “at the heart of much controversy about qualitative findings are doubts about the nature of the analysis”, which suggests and promotes caution Patton (1999, p.1190)

Having collected data through prescribed BNIM interviewing methods, the next decision to take was - how to analyse it? The most obvious at that time was to consider the methods and methodology as laid down by BNIM. In mapping out the sequential processes of BNIM interpretation procedure, there are stages of analysis to complete extracting the various components from the narrative supplied by the participant and undertaken in a very structured way. “The technique involves the use of reflective teams to analyse qualitative data and is based upon a narrative interpretive method” (Jones, 2004, p.96). An initial attraction of BNIM is that it provides the opening up of possibilities in interpretation rather than relying on the primary researcher’s sole interpretation of the materials. Knowledge of the specific research methods or field of study are not a mandate for the BNIM reflective teams deployed, rather that the individuals involved should have an “openness, creativity and imagination” (Jones, 2004, p.104).

A first step in the BNIM analysis phase is to gather field notes, documents and other historical (even recent) research materials which along with the data gained from the BNIM interviews, transcripts and field notes provides the Biographical Data Chronology (BDC) and the Biographical Data Analysis (BDA).

The BDC is contextualised when linked with external and peripheral (to the individual) events to provide the BDA and thus the 'living of the lived life' – identifying where and when each life event fits in with the wider picture historically.

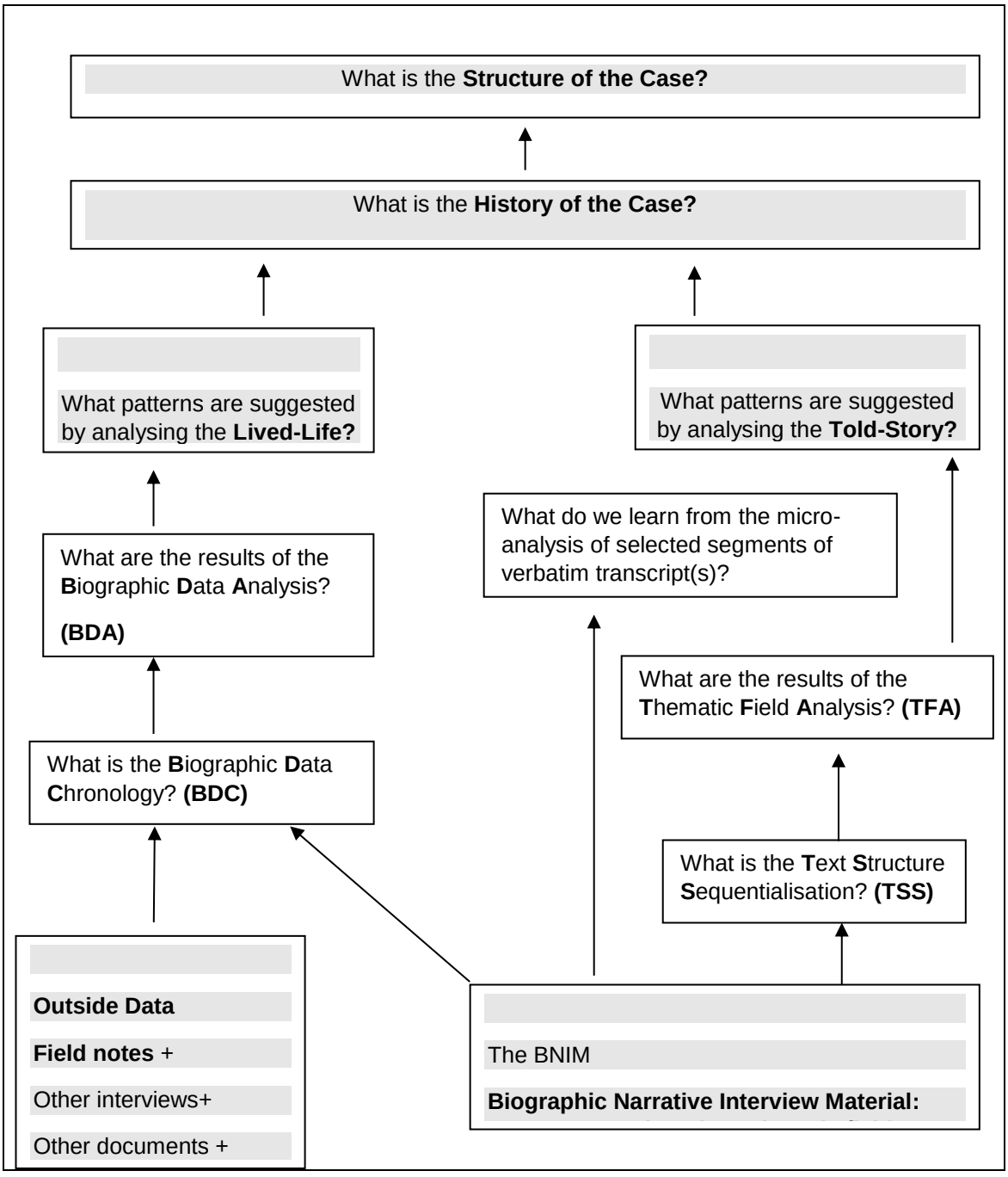

Figure 20: Diagrammatic representation of BNIM structure (Wengraf, 2004 p.23)

Thus, the analysis provides a sequential pattern over a life period, or as this research requires, a pattern over a specific time within a life period, ie, while individuals were working as flying faculty, (left hand side of Figure 20).

A second strand to the analysis phase uses the transcripts of the interview material to reconstruct the experience of the individuals as he or she interpreted events and told their story in the interview. It requires an interpretation team to go forward through the events, taking each identified occurrence separately and 'future-blind' hypothesise, one by one, not knowing what comes next each time. The BNIM interview transcripts are segmented and numbered page by page and line by line providing the Text Structure Sequentialisation (TSS) (i.e., the order in which the interviewee provided their story). The BNIM researcher is then able to initiate the analysis phase working with the interpretive team and undertaking a micro-analysis of selected segments of verbatim transcript.

It is intended that each item is presented separately to the BNIM interpretation team who are asked to consider and hypothesise how the individual might have experienced the event at the time and if it were so, what might occur next, ie, the following hypothesis. The process is repeated for each life-event and provides the Thematic Field Analysis or Teller Flow Analysis (TFA), identifying the patterns suggested to provide the telling of the Told Story, (see right hand side of Figure 20). According to Wengraf and BNIM principles: "The question about the dynamics of the case can then be addressed: why did the people who lived their lives like *this,* tell their stories like *that?*" (Wengraf, 2001, p.145).

In discussing the transcribing of BNIM interviews Wengraf notes that:

> Trans-script' suggests that a whole experience of interview interaction has been 'transformed into script', has been /condensed/re-symbolised/ into writing. When we have taken an inter-human encounter and 'trans-ed' it into a 'trans-script', we have in doing so gained a lot, but we have also 'set aside' a lot of relevant information (Wengraf, 2011, p.879).

The impression is that the qualitative data has now been used and morphed to be used in a different way: as the processed data of the biographic data chronology (BDC) and the text structure sequentialisation (TSS). So, do we forget the transcript following all the efforts taken to get it? This raised some concerns with me that the process, innovative though it may be, was leading the research, rather than the data gathered providing answers to questions raised. Wengraf, provides some comment:

> .. for the interpretive panels for chunk-by-chunk analysis, we have to put the even-richer tape and transcript to one side…. these … panels are key to raising the quality of the post-panel further interpretive work by the researcher (Wengraf, 2011, p.721).

Whilst having some serious concerns with reference to this part of the research analysis, I decided to trial Wengraf's analytical process as a small pilot exercise. In an attempt to fulfil the whole BNIM process, I invited a lawyer, a former HM Inspector of Schools, and a university Director of International Development to make up a team to act as an interpretive panel. They were chosen solely for their specialist ability to analyse and interpret reports and information. For me, their role in the BNIM methodology was to hypothesise and reflect on the stories narrated and provide an insight into the strengths and adaptive capacities for future involvement. Following discussions of this group and some sample testing, I was not completely convinced of its efficacy as a suitable tool for this particular phase of the study, although I could see the possible advantages in

other spheres and situations. For this research, I remained unconvinced that this was the most appropriate and effective method of analysis.

During the BNIM training I undertook a number of interviews with BNIM course participants and others and also a significant number of case study analysis as part of a small team. As a result of this experience, whilst still appreciating the essence of the BNIM interview process as a whole, the format of the interpretive panel, seemed both complicated and less than pragmatic for those involved in a very practically-focussed sector, the subject of my research. The data-gathering method was appropriate for my study, the interpretive method was not. I felt that the interpretive method was better suited to socio-longitudinal studies, rather than data analysis of the qualitative responses that I had gathered. I felt that whilst a useful tool in some circumstances to provide a profile of a lived life, it would not pose the practical answers that I needed to the questions that I had raised as the focus of my research. It was a time for reflection and to consider the best solution to interpret the results and provide best vehicle for the analysis phase of the study.

3.8 Review of BNIM research methods

Wengraf (2004), whilst declaring that BNIM method of narrative interviewing will provide rich data, also noted that there are many methods of interpreting narrative materials and that it is perfectly possible to generate data by way of BNIM interview but use a different way of interpreting that data. This is very much the conclusion that I had come to. By taking the information from the individual interviews and then the focus group, combining and correlating resulting composite detail and coding it specifically to provide cogent results

would provide a reliable output for the study. I felt that the analysis phase of BNIM was clearly something that would not provide the answers I needed and could indeed be a somewhat pointless process. This self-reflexive discussion was worthwhile. I again considered a number of research models, some of which were instigated by Wengraf's (2012) own writings and are shown below in diagrammatic form. I have adapted them to particularly reference flying faculty (FF). They are indicated as Figures 21 to 25 with further explanatory commentary on my choices.

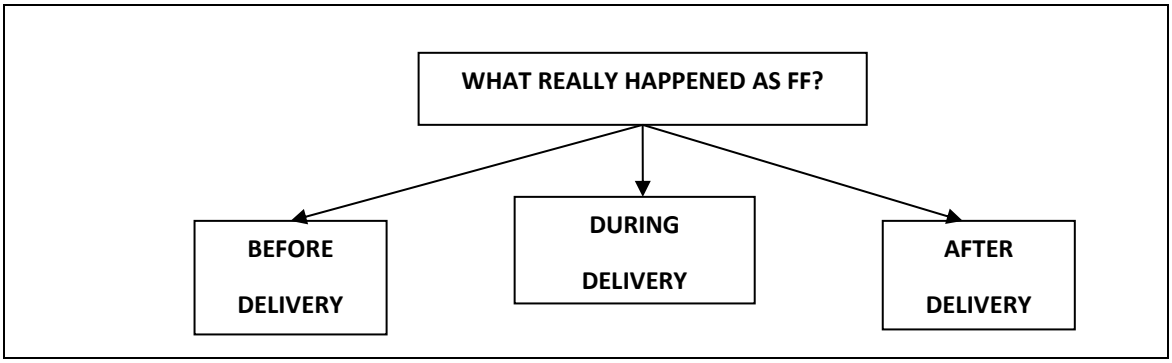

Figure 21: Whieldon after Wengraf (2012 p. 85) 'Before, During and After an Event' stories

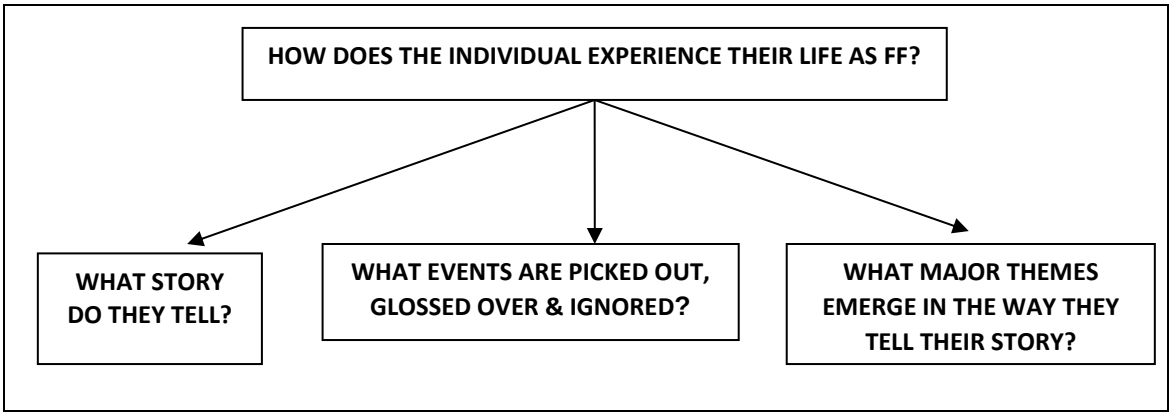

Figure 22: Whieldon after Wengraf (2012 p.86) 'Life Events and Life Stories'

For me Figure 21 demonstrated exactly what I wanted and needed to find out as the basis of my research, perhaps with some aspects of Figure 22 included and would offer an appropriate foundation for data gathering. Following preliminary

work and discussions with other flying faculty members and in conjunction with the literature available, the issues seemed to be evolving into these basic categories. However, I was still not sure it would provide all the answers.

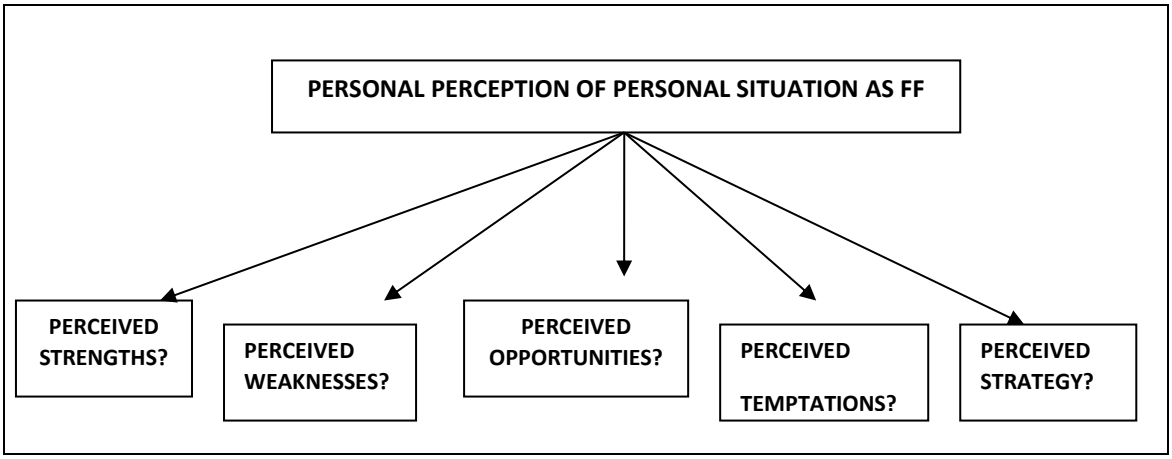

Figure 23: Whieldon after Wengraf (2012 p.86) 'Personal Perception of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Temptations and Strategies (SWOTS)

Figure 24 indicates information and data that I had found were part of most interview sessions that I had done and were almost a 'given' in the few experiences I had to date. Once I had had the opportunity to study such alternatives in diagrammatic form, I was more convinced that BNIM in total (Figure 20) was not the best vehicle for my research. Other methods deserved due consideration.

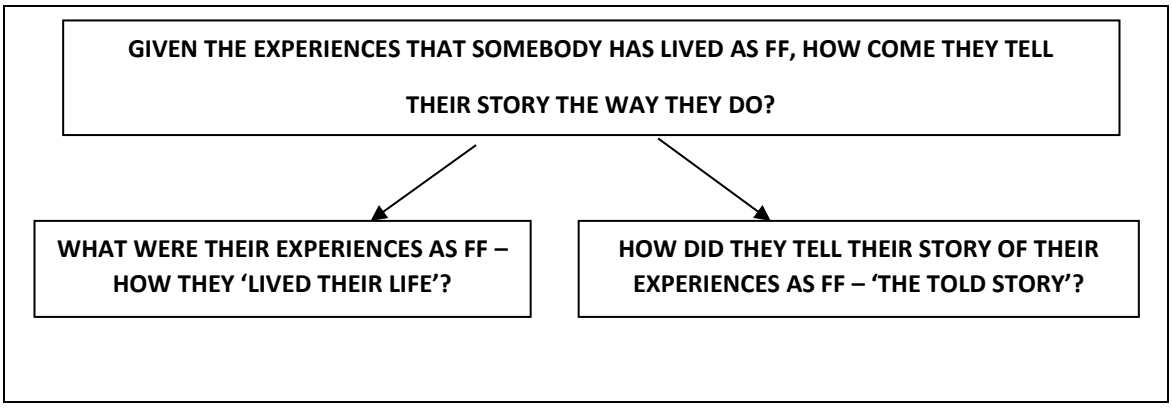

Figure 24: Whieldon after Wengraf (2012 p.87) 'BNIM'

On reflection I decided that the most appropriate way forward was to develop my own research plan based on a Wengrafian format to map out the plan for the study, Figure 25. Thus, while the whole of the BNIM process was not what I needed, I concluded that the three-stage interview process of the BNIM method was still the most effective to elicit the data from the subjects involved.

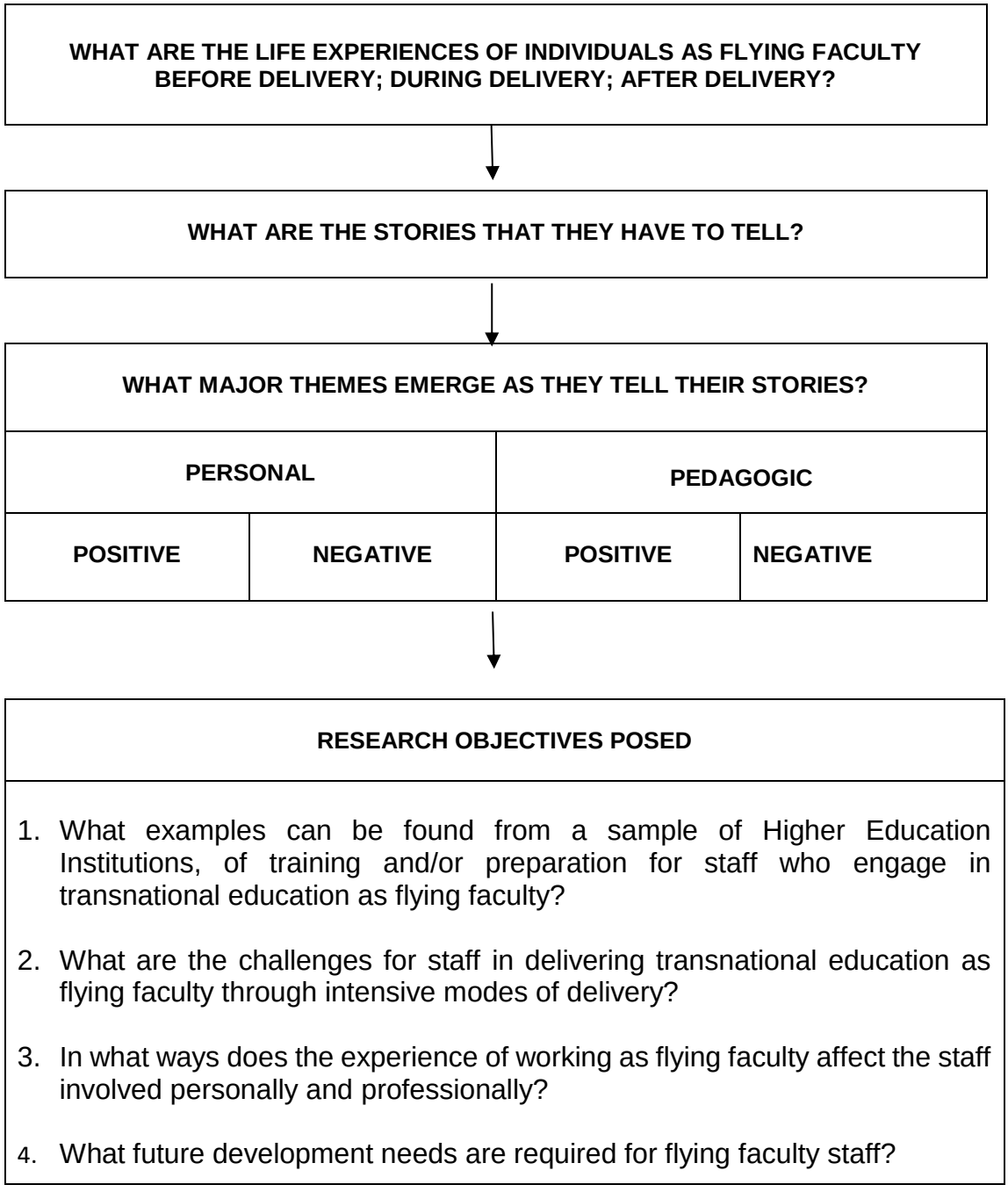

Figure 25: Research plan for the study influenced by BNIM principles. (Whieldon)

3.9 Sampling

3.9.1 Interviewees

Having decided on interviewing as an aspect of qualitative research being used, identifying those potential participants involved in flying faculty work was important. In selecting the sample to be interviewed, it was important to achieve a balanced grouping. I had read other researcher's work based on small samples: Smith, (2012a, 2012b), focusses on five male subjects holding senior positions within one higher education institution and which she admits had limitations. I was unsure that this size and type of sample would elicit the answers to questions posed or at best be limited in reliable findings and conclusions. I felt that the sample should be from a wider catchment, with a wider representation from the academics involved as flying faculty than was used for Smith's research.

At that time, I had no experience of the length of time such interviews would take, the depth of knowledge and diversity of experiences that would be gained from such a group. I was surprised at the amount of information and detail which the participants provided. Although over two decades ago, Chesla summarised the essence of narrative research: "by adopting a narrative rather than an empirical mode of inquiry, we allow reviewers to get closer to the phenomenon studied …" (Chesla, 1995, p.73). He goes on to explain that such narrative inquiry is personal yet specific, gradually unfolding aspects of knowledge in everyday language.

This process of in-depth interviewing is expensive in time, money and energy even if the sample group is small (which it inevitably is). There was also an

element of judgement or purposeful sample as the participants needed to understand this type of work and have some experience of it, even if minimal. Those invited to be involved were readily comparable and I felt the most productive to answer the research questions based on my own knowledge of the research area and the demographic variables that could influence the impact on their flying faculty activities. These are identified clearly in Figure 26. Efforts were made in selection, to ensure that participants were varied as to gender, age, whether they had any dependents, the number of years of higher education teaching experience and also the number of years working as flying faculty.

Interviewees by • **initials** • **university** • **position**	**Gender**	**Age**	**Dependants**	**Years teaching in Higher Education**	**Years teaching as flying faculty**
AF (A) SL	F	39	None	7	3
BP (A) SL	F	43	1	10	2
SF (A) SL	F	45	2	18	3
CB (B) SL	M	27	1	1	1
LH (B) PL	F	55	1	30	10
JB (B) PL	F	60	1	30	10

Figure 26: Demographic of interviewees: (A) – denotes University A; (B) - denotes University B
SL = Senior Lecturer; PL = Principal Lecturer

The group were taken from, University A, relatively new to delivery of transnational education through flying faculty, the other University (B), having some ten years' experience in the process. Both were post-92 city universities. I was buoyed in my selection of this small group approach by articles based around similar studies referred to in my literature review which were held to have validity even though based on data gathered from small scale studies. For me the data, analysis and potential output gains based on representativeness and typicality of my sample are a key pointer and in line with the observation

that: “qualitative research should produce social explanations which are generalisable in some way, or which have a wider resonance” (Mason, 1996, p.6).

3.9.2 HEA Focus Group

While undertaking preliminary interviews for the study, I attended and participated in a number of conferences and meetings of academics interested in trans-national education. I was invited to undertake a role with the Higher Education Academy (HEA), of which I was a Senior Fellow, to lead a working (focus) group as part of a Special Interest Group (SIG) in the development of a section on staff development for transnational education to produce a ‘Good Practice Guide’ (GPG). I was pleased to accept. I felt that along with the data from my university samples, there was an additional possibility of triangulating my research along with the literature and thus provide greater validity to the research. It provided a different demographic source and style of qualitative data gathering which could support and/or test that already gathered. I agree with Cousin in her approach that:

> focus group research appeals to many higher education researchers because its data gathering process extends the academic practice of exploratory discussion. Focus group research is based on the principle that rich data can be elicited from group interactivity (Cousin, 2009, p.51).

The interaction between a like-minded group with subject knowledge can be quite rich and powerful as ideas, views, concepts are shared and compared.

SUBJECT	GENDER	AGE	ROLE IN HE	INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE – YEARS?
JW	Female	60+	Principal Lecturer	15
NH	Male	50-59	Professor PVC	10
LH	Female	50-59	Principal Lecturer	12
ML	Female	50-59	Senior Lecturer	0
AL	Female	40-49	Professor	5
AB	Male	40-49	Principal Lecturer	15
LV	Female	40-49	Senior Lecturer	4
WH	Female	40-49	Senior Lecturer	3
NB	Female	40-49	Senior Lecturer	6
FM	Female	40-49	Senior Lecturer	5
KS	Female	40-49	Senior Lecturer	6
CB	Female	30-39	Senior Lecturer	3

Figure 27: Demographic of members of the HEA Special Interest Group acting as a focus group for this study. Participants are anonymised by their initials in the subject column.

Morgan notes that: “Participants in focus groups often say the most interesting aspect of their discussions is the chance to “share and compare” their ideas and experiences” (Morgan, 1997, p.21). The group focussing on staff development for which I was leader is noted in Figure 27. It indicates a range of ages, role levels and experience and although only involving two male participants out of the six in total, does again provide a balance to Smith’s (2012a, 2012b) research which was solely male-based. These sessions provided a wealth and diversity of information which enriched the evidence base and provided a wider range of perspective. The staff development group comprised some twelve core members in total with a hierarchically wide-ranging group including a Pro-Vice Chancellor, Principal and Senior Lecturers. They were all highly motivated to provide input and volunteered because of their personal interest in work undertaken as flying faculty in transnational education for their institutions.

Working with a focus group often goes a step further than one-to-one interviews, since there is an almost supportive structure of having like-minded participants gathered together in a discussion. Initial areas of concern were mooted and discussed and a number of set headings evolved to be the focus of workshop sessions. These issues were generally compatible with the questions raised for my research and provided validation of the areas of concern raised in the literature review. To initiate discussions, the key areas identified by the group were put as headings on flip chart pages and the focus group actively involved in agreeing summary comments and responses as shown in Figure 28.

1	What is currently being done to prepare staff for transnational delivery?
2	What areas are needed for staff development?
3	What should a Good Practice Guide (GPG) contain to help staff?
4	What resources would help to address staff development?
5	Summary of what can be produced for the GPG?

Figure 28: Key areas identified and providing structure for focus group discussions

The meetings and workshops which I held for the group involved all-day intensive sessions from time to time and in different geographical locations, with much input from all attendees and by follow-up email contact. The attendance at the four sessions and the email contact varied from individual to individual. I understood my role to be that of facilitator of discussions, occasionally as prompt to ensure the focus was maintained, but without controlling the discussions, and also as collator of the information gathered. It was important to my study to gather common views and experiences from this knowledgeable group which could then provide an additional source of data to consider alongside the BNIM interview transcripts. The workshops and subsequent email discussions, identified a number of clear areas needing attention and focus within the categories numbered 1 to 5, Figure 28. The ongoing focus group meetings provided data for the group response in preparation for later analysis.

The outlines of the HEA focus group on staff development for transnational education were developed by the members of the group with the caveat that anyone could provide additional information on the subject of staff development

at the workshops or by email. It was clearly a very relevant topic and provided useful and pertinent data for later analysis. Further meetings, looking specifically at what a GPG should contain to be most useful to participants, noted three key areas for discussion as the pre-, during and post-delivery stages for flying faculty working offshore. For each area, they then discussed and articulated specific agreed issues which in their experience they believed were the most important, Figure 29.

Initial issues: support and training for 'flying faculty' needed pre- during- and post-delivery	
Stage	**Issue**
Pre-delivery	
During-delivery	
Post-delivery	

Figure 29: Outline points to note from meetings of the Focus Group for TNE

Outputs from these meetings were annotated on flip charts, transcribed and shared with the group for approval with any amendments made and finally agreed as part of the content for the GPG to follow.

It would seem that I have come full circle in my research of research methods. I had always had reservations on the size of the sample (six) providing truly representative results – as my first reaction when reading Smith's paper (2012a) based on a sample of just five seemed so unrepresentative. I now came to the conclusion that this bespoke version of research method would provide the best option as the basis for gathering and analysing the data from the university participants for my study. Including the results of the HEA focus would provide a well-informed and credible perspective and be representative of

flying faculty as a type. I believe that the data gathered from these two sources, the one, an unfettered, unguided interview dialogue, the other, providing data out of a dynamic focus group discussion and interaction provided the best of both worlds; each providing checks and balances on the other and enhancing the validity of the study. This is supported by Cousin:

> Qualitative data analysis is a creative engagement with the empirical data, the literature and, where possible, conversations with the people who provided the data. Careful engagement with this combination supports our search for understandings and insights into human experiences, conditions and perceptions (Cousin, 2009, p.50).

This summarised exactly what I wanted to achieve.

3.10 Rationale for method of analysis

A key event which assisted in the initial preparation for the data analysis phase was the fact that the individual who originally agreed to transcribe the interviews had to withdraw. This meant that although it took much longer for me to painstakingly word-process the interview materials, the process of reading and re-reading each part and whole, meant that I could still visualize the interview, the individual, their commentary, paralinguistic styles and details. The bonus from this was that it ensured an on-going intimacy with the data, so crucial to the analysis stage to come. Additionally, I have maintained a pragmatic awareness throughout the process, that whatever is said in an interview, can be assessed as just momentary. However, with this particular topic, it was a slowly growing, on-going individual experience, more readily approached by systematic analysis by way of some form of coding. Whilst not wanting to over-fragment the data, by looking at the common themes from the interview transcripts, it did provide an overall structure which provided a good and useful starting point.

The relationship between qualitative data and analysis is an important one, with the often, inevitable practice of the analytical process beginning during the actual data collection, even if somewhat subconsciously and which Cousin (2009) sees as quite natural. The subsequent sequential analysis provides the researcher with the opportunity to move back and forth to refine questions, hypothesise and follow any emerging avenues of inquiry to assist in further analysis Huberman, (1984). I am indebted to Cousin who clearly sets out some "suggested principles to support a reflexive approach to data analysis" (Cousin, 2009, pp.35-36). The most likely used type of analysis for qualitative data is constant comparison analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) or coding. Leech and Onwuegbuzie note that:

> Constant comparison can be undertaken deductively (e.g., codes are identified prior to analysis and then looked for in the data), inductively (e.g., codes emerge from the data), or abductively (i.e., codes emerge iteratively) (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007 p. 565).

This constant comparison analysis involves the researcher reading and sifting through all the data and separating it out into parts which are naturally linked based on their content and which can then be labelled with a code as a classification. The exercise is repeated so that similar chunks of data are assembled together providing selected common themes. It may be that there is other commentary, which although gathered under the auspices of the defined research may best be saved for another time.

Thus, it was important to periodically view the data holistically and not just focus on themes and chunks of data naturally separated into groups, although this is the instinctive first process to undertake. This can be done through the

interpretive act of actually looking for and trying to work out what the data is saying, rather than what is expected or indeed looked for, to answer the research questions specifically. Taking cue from the data and using constant comparison analysis principles deductively, I have hopefully achieved sufficient analysis to pose responses to the research questions raised.

3.11 Method of analysis of interview transcript data

All transcripts of interviews undertaken with the participants from the two universities were assembled in preparation for analysis. The individuals and the universities were anonymised by alpha-designation. They consisted of a mixture of senior and principal lecturers with an age range from 39 to 60 years with one or two dependents. The group consisted of one male and five females with between one, and thirty years' experience of higher education teaching and specifically between one and ten years working as flying faculty.

To undertake the preliminary analysis, I took each transcript, identified specific criteria, topics and activities as they occurred in the text and which were highlighted by the individuals. As the data was re-visited, read and re-read, themes and common categories were identified providing the first step to developing an index. The initial prompt came from a phrase or particular phrases, incidents, or types of behaviour, a negative or a positive experience. This enabled data to be identified and examined in a systematic way using constant comparison to establish clear categories for later analysis. This first step provided a simple yet comprehensive set of findings under a set of headings. This approach is supported by Pope et al (2000 p.114), who notes

that: “The key point about this process is that it is inclusive; categories are added to reflect as many of the nuances in the data as possible…”.

3.12 Method of analysis of focus group data

The unexpected opportunity to work with a group of academics experienced in flying faculty matters provided rich data to add to that achieved from the individual interviews taken from the two participating university groups of flying faculty staff. My experience of involvement with focus groups to date is that when a researcher gathers together a group of people to talk about something, their contributions and understandings are enriched by the group dynamic, whilst their freedom to share and compare is both empowering and often exhilarating. This was a wider group than the selected university’s samples in a number of ways. There were 12 members from different institutions across a wide geographic catchment. Their roles ranged from senior/principal lecturer to professors and a Pro-Vice Chancellor and consisted of ten females and 2 males with an age range from thirty to sixty plus. Members of the group had 0-15 years’ experience as flying faculty.

The group dynamic enhanced the richness of the resulting data. If it is a topic dear to their hearts, it is often the first time that anyone has ever *‘listened’,* or the first time that they have had the opportunity to *‘say’* or *‘vent’* pent up notions, beliefs and emotions which have been forced or allowed to lay fallow. Participants were able to clarify, extend and review their understanding and demonstrate a clear overview across a geographical, sociological and institutional spread and also draw on the experiences of others in their respective universities.

3.13 Ethical considerations

Embarking on the process of gathering data for this study consideration needed to be given to the selection of the sample, both interviewees and the focus group. Those selected were inevitably guided to some extent by the central research objectives based around flying faculty so as to produce relevant material for the research. Other criteria for consideration was ease of access to the individuals, the amount of experience they have of the subject in question, their capacity to express that experience in words and their probability of talking openly and honestly. The purpose and processes of ethical considerations when related to interview participants is significant when relating to BNIM methods. As Wengraf notes:

> The ethics of the research interview are that, at minimum, the informant should not be changed for the worse: against certain objections, I maintain that the research interview is not designed to 'help' or 'empower', or 'change' the informant at all (Wengraf, 2001 p.4).

The decision for the interview sample originally selected for this research was an opportunistic sample, Patton (1999) or convenience sample Marshall, (1996) of three staff, each from two university Law Schools undertaking transnational education as flying faculty. I had been a member of staff previously at one university law school and an external examiner at the other and so had some access, knowledge and credibility with the senior staff there who could be approached in a collegiate manner to request their employees' potential involvement.

In line with ethics requirements and hierarchical protocols within the institutions concerned, I first gained written permissions from the Deans of the Law Schools concerned, to approach staff involved in transnational education as flying faculty. From a list provided by the Heads of School, I selected a potential list of subjects based on no more knowledge than their gender and amount of experience in the field of flying faculty. I was fortunate in that all of those selected as first choices in each institution were keen to be involved in the research. Consent forms were drafted, sent and signed. Letters were also sent to the proposed participants, much in line with Denscombe's (2007) helpful guide and addressing the key elements of: research outline, ethics, contact details, expected contribution, right to withdraw, confidentiality and security. Additionally, the proposed participants were assured that any data/information provided by them was to be anonymous and untraceable.

The trust element of this aspect of the sample selection was more effective since there was a mutual trust and understanding from all involved as in both institution's cases, myself as the researcher and the subject participants were lawyers working within law schools in higher education institutions. Due to the nature of the narrative interviewing process I was mindful of the ethical responsibilities when working with the interviewees, especially with reference to any sensitive issues which they may discuss. Thus, along with the undertaking of strict confidentiality, I ensured that various support mechanisms were available through informal counselling post-interview. I also ensured that they had the opportunity to undertake a debriefing session should they feel it necessary.

Following significant expansion in transnational education activity in the higher education sector in the UK, the HEA set up an initiative to form a special interest group (SIG) to develop a GPG for the key areas involving academics who work transnationally offshore. A preliminary meeting of those interested staff, both academics and administrative from higher education institutions across the country, was scheduled, to design a framework which could then lead to work within specialist areas to provide an overall guide. The focus was on six key areas: staff development, student experience, models/ definitions, partnerships, equality and diversity, quality assurance agency. I was asked to lead the group on staff development. This unsought opportunity was a potential rich source of information to support my study but needed to be dealt with both sensitively and ethically.

As focus group leader I was required to send out a personal brief introduction using JISCMail. Twelve participants opted to be involved in the staff development group, from various employment levels within their universities thus providing a wide demographic and articulate group focusing on staff development. I was fortunate in that skills learned long ago when training as a mediator and arbitrator were able to be used to overcome the variants of age, sex and status and I was pleased that no divisive factors impacted on the resultant output. It was therefore a truly opportunist sample and an invaluable one, but one which needed to have the appropriate ethics approach as identified and used for the individuals from University A and University B who were already participating. I first of all asked permission of the HEA overall Lead to include the results of the relevant research undertaken with the focus group

to use as part of the data gathering for my thesis. This was agreed. I then requested the group's permission to use information provided by them, both as a group and individually, ensuring that the ethical issues were again addressed and within the BERA (2011) guidelines.

In working with this group and also as the lead, I made them aware of my doctoral study and wrote to them explaining the fact that I would like to use the material(s) gained from the workshops, and also asking if they wished to be named as a referenced provider or remain anonymous. They all agreed that the results provided by their joint efforts could be used as part of my research and there was a mix of those who wished to be identified and referenced individually and those who did not, but were happy to contribute. A clear indication of confidentiality by way of published statement to all those involved was issued and re-stated at the beginning of each workshop session and as a preface at the beginning of the report. This was distributed to and approved by all contributors. This clarity for all the participants was an asset to ensuring that the participants felt protected and any data provided by them was unfettered by concerns of confidentiality, assisting in provision of clarity and honesty of concerns relating to the individual participants.

3.14 Summary

This chapter has presented the research purpose and methodological framework underpinning this study and outlined the ways in which the data presented in the following chapters was framed, analysed and interpreted. Techniques and methods for gathering high quality data have been discussed as well as the researcher's philosophical belief in the value of qualitative inquiry.

Credibility of the researcher has been established by an acknowledgement as being an informed practitioner, but with any potential subjectivity being seen as a positive rather than a negative influence on the study.

BNIM was originally chosen within an interpretivist paradigm with interviews used as the first block of gathered data. The interviewing phase began in 2013 and concluded in 2014. Interviews were transcribed by the researcher alone. Having trialled the interpretive part of the BNIM process, I realised that it did not fit so readily with the topic matter of the study and was much more aligned to socio-historic subjects. However, the iterative biographical interview style was appropriate for the study and I still used this method to gather data. Additionally, I was provided with an ideal opportunity to lead a working group for the HEA to gather data from working with a self-selected group of academics from a number of Higher Education Institutions to gather data as the basis of developing a GPG for the delivery of transnational programmes of study offshore; my particular section was specifically with staff development. This along with the literature review provided ideal triangulation to substantiate the outputs from this study.

The journey of gathering the qualitative data to hopefully provide at least some solutions, recommendations, or conclusions to the research first of all to address the objectives of the study and subsequently the questions which evolved for this study, was just a part of the whole. In itself it was developmental, moving from a regimented BNIM structure to form an unusual hybrid between BNIM interviewee subjects and the data provided by the focus group. These two sources provided rich and complimentary data from a variety

of universities and subject areas with the one common denominator – that of the work of flying faculty in transnational education.

4. Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

This study was originally guided by four objectives which were condensed to provide two focussed research questions:

1. In what ways does the experience of working as flying faculty affect the staff involved personally and professionally?
2. What future development needs are required for flying faculty staff?

In line with these questions, I examined the professional, practical and personal issues and apprehensions experienced by flying faculty undertaking delivery of educational programmes offshore and raised by the participants in this study; the events which affected them as individuals and as educational practitioners. I also analysed what development needs are identified by both participant groups which could be implemented to allay some of those apprehensions.

I use the word ‘apprehensions’ since it was a word raised by a number of the interviewees and, in line with the definition from the Oxford dictionary of: uneasiness; dread; fearful, it would seem a more appropriate description, rather than ‘issue’ or ‘concern’ and I shall continue to use it throughout the study. I have addressed the ways in which the interviewee participants provided qualitative data for the study either through interviews or the focus group. I now move on to analyse that data and progressing to a naturally emerging coding/index to develop analytical categories through naturally evolving patterns and themes.

The data had many similarities and, indicated by their responses, main categories of concern. For the interviewees, it was from the perspective of their

‘lived lives’ (Wengraf, 2004) as a member of flying faculty pre-, during- and post-delivery, representing not only the practitioners’ stances, but where they ‘stood’ at that moment in time. For the focus group, whilst there was similar understanding and memory of the same lived life situations, their contributions were enhanced by the freedom to share experiences in an open forum.

I felt that it was necessary to separate the two sources initially: the interview participants and the focus group for this analysis. The interviewee data gathered was by way of a personal and confidential process, unstructured and unled by pre-determined questions. The focus group was more interactive and dynamic with each member of the group participating freely in the company of the others with any structure provided by the participants alone. The resulting data had different sources and provided their own strengths in fulfilling the objectives and answering the research questions with many underlying themes. I believe the validity of the study is enhanced through analysis of the different data gathering methods so that they are seen as comparative sources, separately and then combined. Each of the two sources provided cogent answers to the research questions raised and their emerging apprehensions bridged both pedagogic and personal areas.

4.2 Research Question 1:

In what ways does the experience of working as flying faculty affect the staff involved personally and professionally?

It was notable that certain categories of issue were common to more of the interviewees than others. Thus, to enable a clearer picture I arranged the results into a table noting numerically hierarchical areas of concern, Figure 30.

TOPIC raised in BNIM interview sessions	UNIVERSITY A			UNIVERSITY B			TOTAL
	AF	BP	SF	CU	JB	LH	
1. Pre-visit informal mentoring provided	*	*	*	*	*	*	6
2. Materials preparation issues	*	*	*	*	*	*	6
3. Teaching and learning issues	*	*	*	*	*	*	6
4. Negative outcomes for staff	*	*	*	*	*	*	6
5. Delivery styles	*	*	*	*	*		5
6. Organisation issues	*	*	*	*	*		5
7. No previous experience	*	*	*	*		*	5
8. Resources	*	*	*		*	*	5
9. Accommodation and travel		*	*	*	*	*	5
10. Personal problems/critical incidents	*	*	*		*	*	5
11. Cultural issues	*	*	*		*		4
12. Peer observation	*		*	*	*		4
13. Solutions/advice	*		*		*	*	4
14. Staff Training not provided	*	*	*			*	4
15. Schedules	*		*	*			3
16. Positive outcomes for staff			*	*		*	3
17. Impact on staff post-delivery			*	*		*	3
18. Staff incentives?	*		*			*	3
19. Pre-visit formal briefing/mentoring				*	*		2
20. Debriefing/team meetings	*					*	2
21. Staff Training provided					*		1
22. Previous experience					*		1
23. Personal preparation for visit	*						1

Figure 30: Formulation of interview data from University A and University B re-aligned to hierarchical concerns rather than chronologically or topically. The darkest shaded area indicates maximum points of concern; lighter shaded area indicates points of high concern.

Individual highest levels of concern were noted in points 1-4 and other key areas of concern as points 5-10, shaded in Figure 30. Taking the topics indicating maximum concern and apprehension, it is clear that they provide sound responses to the first three objectives as noted in the literature review and incorporated into research question one. Topics highlighted were either professional or personal.

4.3 Pedagogic apprehensions emerging from the interview data

The word *'apprehensions'* as used in the heading above, came from the interviewees themselves and referred to either aspects of teaching and learning or personal experiences as flying faculty. It therefore seemed a natural choice when undertaking the analysis to use these titles. The following detailed analysis is taken from the data as arranged in Figure 30. The transcript quotes are noted as University A or B followed by the individual's anonymised initials and fall naturally into the categories of pre- during and post-delivery stages.

4.3.1 Pre-delivery

Pre-visit preparation

While "it is recognised that universities generally send their more experienced senior teachers to teach offshore" (Debowski, 2003, p.1), all staff interviewed from Universities A and B indicated that some pre-visit informal briefing and/or mentoring were important to them, especially those new to this style of teaching.

"When I ask people to go as flying faculty they tend to get quite stressed. Although it is exciting, it makes them very nervous the first time. I have never had any formal training in TNE. The first time I went to teach a programme module overseas, I was just sent out to do it with no preparation". (B-LH)

It is interesting to note that University A provided no formal preparation in the form of mentoring at all and university B seemed to have no corporate formal pre-visit mandate for pre-visit briefing. Any preparation was relatively ad hoc and the responsibility of the particular supervising programme leader.

"In terms of all of these teaching visits we have simply learned as we've gone along. So we haven't had any training, we haven't had any kind of development for these teaching trips." (A-AF)

This is not necessarily an overt criticism of the institution per se, as only one interviewee either carried out some personal preparation on their own initiative pre-visit, or the comment indicates that this was an issue for just one interviewee. However, this does not reflect what is required for, or what is considered, the UK 'norm' for preparation of delivery. Dunn and Wallace (2006, p.358) indicate that: "due preparations need to be made if a university is to engage in transnational teaching, particularly by helping its academic … staff to develop intercultural competencies".

A recommendation that universities 'ensure that staff are well prepared for overseas assignments and visits' is noted by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC, 2002, p.8), and includes the need to adapt the curriculum and provide support for staff to deal with the stresses related to and impacting on them from overseas travel and the completely different logistics of teaching offshore. Whilst this point is made and often made clearly by such bodies and researchers publishing specifically in this field, the reality, confirmed by the interviewees, is that no such provision takes place. The following quote illustrates the importance of this omission:

> While current mentoring practices may be operating successfully in some places, formal recognition of the importance of this process is important to ensure that it is practised effectively and routinely (Gribble and Ziguras, 2003, p.214).

Additionally, "the continued growth of transnational programmes has meant that the ability to teach effectively on such programmes is becoming essential to academic work in many universities" (Gribble and Ziguras, 2003, p.206). With the rapid development of programme delivery offshore, academics have an increased awareness of the pedagogical issues surrounding this type of

delivery, but any such awareness has been learned through actually doing the job, with few institutions providing any specific professional development to suit the role (Ozogic et al, 2004). This does not provide the best introduction to this unique pedagogy, as noted by the interviewees. Nor does it provide a foundation for delivery of future programmes for this ever-expanding market.

No previous experience

Some participants raised previous experience, or lack of it as an issue which caused some apprehension. This would therefore seem to be a key issue encompassing a set of activities that should and could take place to alleviate many of the apprehensions that staff involved in the activity of flying faculty should be entitled to expect. If they have no or little previous experience, what is available for them as individuals to prepare them for the task? Are there any formal or informal meetings of briefing sessions? Is there any staff training provided for this intensive teaching? Is there provision for any personal advice provided which could be helpful, and so necessary from an employment care perspective? Any assistance in any of these areas provided by a higher education institution responsible for sending academics offshore to teach would have helped to negate much of the apprehensions weighing on the individuals who may be completely new to or inexperienced as flying faculty.

"A lot can go wrong when people go overseas even though they do the risk assessment. I'm still finding things that go wrong on a case by case basis." (A-LJH)

It could be deduced that until the participants actually experience life as a member of flying faculty, they do not realise the many different facets of this new role which will affect their professional and also their personal lives. Since they may never have observed or experienced any preparation, design or

delivery of and for intensive teaching before, they have no understanding of what will happen or what to expect. They have no guidance or benchmark.

These views are highlighted by Smith, (2012a, 2012b), Debowski, (2005), and Gribble and Ziguras, (2003). The response from a participant of this study who had the benefit of participating in some teaching observation and some supportive preparation prior to their first ever delivery offshore evidences the significance of this:

"Teaching as flying faculty creates a different environment from the UK class perspective. There is a lot more preparation at the beginning. I was lucky the first time – someone showed me the ropes. I saw the teaching delivered and this affected how I prepared my material: open discussion with the students, observing, settling in, the point of view. When I went to teach, I was able to focus on the teaching because I had got the basic knowledge." (B-CU)

Such comments evidence the fact that if staff are required to work as flying faculty without any significant preparation, training or background knowledge of this type of teaching and learning, they have nothing to fall back on. When provided with some preparatory, structured experience, it enhances confidence.

Accommodation and Travel

This topic is noted as Point 9 on the list of hierarchical concerns for the interviewees which is interesting in itself: that staff put the students and their teaching ahead of their own issues indicates a high level of professionalism. As a topic it encompasses their personal accommodation and travel as well as teaching accommodation whilst delivering and travel to and from their work site.

"When I got there, I had a free day before teaching started. I had never been there before and didn't know the campus or teaching rooms so decided to check it out. They had booked me a room with individual desks with computers fixed on each desk. I had worked out a lot of group work, so spent most of the day getting a room-change. It could have been a disaster. (B-JB)

The majority of interviewees in both universities raised issues of travel and accommodation and also resources as being an issue for them and so have apprehensions ancillary to their programme delivery even before they have started work, in what for them, is an alien environment.

"I spoke to someone who had worked overseas before, but not this particular country. I wanted to know where to stay, where to go and not go. The first person to go is the most exposed." (B-CU)

Debowski (2003) notes that demands of long teaching hours, lengthy travel, potential culture shock along with the pressure of being the sole representative of the UK higher education institution, often not well-supported by the UK campus, and yet *'over there'* as the sole representative, all has a significant impact on these individuals. It is often only when they embark on the journey to get there, actually live the life of a visiting flying faculty, that the real apprehensions surface and have to be dealt with.

"You travel and arrive and what condition you are in after teaching, you need to be prepared physically. It is physical. You travel and then are on your feet. Mentally, you have got to know your content, it challenges you." (B-CU)

<u>Materials preparation; delivery styles</u>

The comments noted below clearly demonstrate that the teaching and learning and the whole proposition of materials preparation and delivery style was an area of concern for the staff interviewed, and understandably so, since it was the very essence of the focus of their visit to another country for and on behalf of their university.

"There was no-one to show me how to put the materials together in the right format for the sessions to be delivered – which were long and very tiring. I was also fairly culturally naïve at the time. Now I try to help others on the teaching side as much as possible." (B-LH)

Clearly staff who survived the experience and learned from disasters and successes are an unused resource for future deliverers. However, they can still be limited in the ad hoc support that they can provide since both experienced and novice staff are having to work with minimum knowledge of the partnership agreements in place for the different host-country partners.

"I deliver in Mauritius and also Athens. I had no idea or involvement in the negotiations with the partner, but each delivery of the same materials has to be done differently because of what was agreed."

One has our staff teaching supported by on-line sessions after; the other has some of our staff and then local tutors after Easter. Then there's the UK delivery. I'm constantly re-jigging material. It's a nightmare. (A-AF)

The majority had equal concern with delivery styles. It would seem to highlight the lack of significance given to the different role of an academic as flying faculty, either by the institution, or, indeed initially by the individuals themselves until they have actually experienced it.

"I did what I could to mentor them in the preparation of materials, style of delivery, in fact any tips, wrinkles and advice that I could. I could obviously only provide advice before they went – then they were on their own." (B-JB)

These comments highlighted some interesting issues; it seems usual that the individual realises that there has to be a *'difference'* transnationally, and often only following a first delivery.

"It's not hard work for them, it's hard work for me! – tailor-making the module for different cohorts. As the tutor I was learning at the same time as the students." (A-SF)

Evans and Tregenza (2002, p.6) found that "assessment structures and processes designed and developed outside of the learner's own nation" needed to be adapted. This view is also supported by the commentary that transnational

lecturers need to develop a good understanding of all aspects relating to the student cohort: social, cultural, political, legal, economic, in fact the whole context of the student's country (Dunn and Wallace, 2006). They also noted that

> .. offshore context in terms of an intercultural curriculum that uses country-relevant case studies and material and more in-depth understanding of the partner institution is also viewed as important (Dunn and Wallace, 2006, p.360).

4.3.2 During Delivery

Teaching and Learning issues

A focus on issues of materials prepared, teaching and resources with University A interviewees indicated concerns about cultural issues to a greater extent than University B.

"I have been to Mauritius twice now. I had never been there. It's interesting. I thought it would be interesting. I looked at what would be interesting to that particular cohort." (A-SF)

Teaching in a different country and completely different culture can be interesting and provide the tutor with a different experience and the opportunity to adapt to the needs of the student, but this can be problematic.

"I'm the tutor, but I'm learning at the same time as the students. Sometimes I feel out of my depth" (*A-BP)*

Whilst being a unique teaching and learning experience, it can also be mentally and physically exhausting, as the following quote suggests:

"Teaching 12 hours in 2 days after travelling is quite draining. At the end you are running on empty, on adrenaline, when you stop, you go straight home." (B-CU)

These comments are supported clearly by the literature:

> Academics teaching off-shore are often required to compress a great deal of information into several intensive lectures. Often academics are required to teach over a weekend, which may involve covering large tracts of the curriculum during two seven or eight-hour lectures (Gribble and Ziguras 2003, p.212).

Additionally, without some pre-departure preparation and knowledge, situations can occur which are outside the experience of individual tutors. Following a lecture break – how do you get them to return promptly? This can be problematic when delivering intensively within a limited time-frame.

"Students late for classes; after 2 hours we had a break and I couldn't get them back - a completely different attitude. I had to go and get them back from the coffee shop." (A-BP)

Dunn and Wallace illustrate the point well:

> "the most prevalent view appears to be that there is a range of skills, competencies and attitudes needed by those who teach in international settings and that cultural inclusivity in the curriculum and pedagogy are highly desirable" (Dunn and Wallace, 2006, p360).

It is also worth noting that staff raised the issue that peer observation/staff liaison and development was an issue for discussion and something that would be considered the 'norm', was not available to them in this forum.

"There is no overseas peer observation to date." (A-SF).

This was seen as an important omission for this particular interviewee since it prevented any *'learning'* from peers. Peer observation is something which is a given in most universities as an annual requirement for staff to undertake to ensure *'sharing of best practice'*. Since intensive delivery is a must for delivery for flying faculty, as well as being an economic imperative, there is no time for peer review or even possibly team teaching.

Organisation and resource issues

The participants from both Universities had equal concern with the organisations involved and the processes that support flying faculty transnational education:

"There was and sometimes still is, no preparation on how to deal with the collaborative partner or individuals within the faculty or university there. There is no constant mechanism to help people in what can be a very stressful situation." (B-LH)

A lack of guidance to deal with the host country partner is difficult for the flying faculty tutor, especially when they are seen as the 'face' of the UK partner university whilst offshore. Staff unprepared for the experience of intensive delivery, isolated from both UK and host partner support and/or contact, exacerbates the situation, causing anxiety at the time and further apprehensions for the next trip.

"My teaching time was a complete improvisation – classes in the afternoon and the evening. I was alone, no-one from the local staff there – the facilities were set up and then it's up to you." (A-BP)

As far as delivery of transnational programmes by flying faculty is concerned there seems to be a variety of what generally may be termed *'resources'* which can cause some issues and raise apprehension.

"I think that they (UK university) need to recognise that email/internet are dodgy in developing countries." (B-SF).

It would seem that there is a wide gap in what the UK university at senior level believes can take place to support and deliver offshore programmes, and what can and does actually take place. The reality is that the people who actually know are the flying faculty, but from the comments made by the participants in

this study, they are not asked and have no input into development of more effective systems and resources.

Resources may be electronic-based, involving virtual learning environments (VLE) as support from the UK campus, use of local tutors to support learning or staff support in delivery of UK teaching. It is a fact that there can be problems with UK campus VLE, but this is relatively easily rectified since tuition takes place during the week and there is departmental expert support to assist, often a telephone call away. Delivery of programmes offshore do not always have that luxury.

"There have been problems with Skype sessions – technical problems that were so bad, the sessions had to be cancelled and re-scheduled. It is all important because as an organisation we are trying to evolve the delivery." (B-LH)

Classes and or student's study is often at the weekends and in the evenings; there are variable time differences in different countries throughout the world, UK campus technician availability is limited. Problems were clearly noted in the interviews:

"They use a chat room via an internet link with all logging on at the same time. There is a problem with electronic support in that the Video/Audio Broadband width is different in Mauritius, so not all students have access. If there are any issues offshore there should be resources, technical support from the UK". (A-AF)

Other resources highlight more in-country problems. Local tutors do not always have the same degree of respect from local students.

"Locally-employed tutors teach the options and there have been criticisms; I am now working with the local tutors to rectify these comments." (A-AF)

Additionally, if they are paying for and receiving a UK award, they want to feel part of the UK experience by being taught by a UK-based tutor.

"Students are OK with local tutors, but do expect some input from us as the UK university because it's our named award – and you can understand that." (B-LH)

Negative outcomes for staff

The actual time spent in-country as flying faculty had some significant issues which would seem to register a serious negative side to the experience.

"I have very little free time – just a couple of hours free time only. I need a break. I just have one afternoon off." (A-BP)

"I have meetings with agents and students during the day, teaching at night and have to keep in touch with UK by emails. It's exhausting. I've spoken to HR, the International Office and the Dean - "fell on deaf ears." (B-JB)

These comments highlight what are seen as quite basic needs for staff, coupled with the fact that if they are to adapt their materials (Dunn and Wallace, 2004), and ensure local contextualisation (Prowse and Goddard, 2010; Evans and Tregenza, 2002), (Debowski, 2005), (Gribble and Ziguras, 2003), and all other aspects required of quality provision, then staff fulfilling these roles need to have the opportunity, and should be positively encouraged, to absorb the environment and culture in which they are required to work. This cannot be achieved by having to teach every moment of their visit and return home as soon as the last syllable has been spoken.

"…we have so little free time while we are there, we could be anywhere – Birmingham or Blackpool – just a little warmer. I think if we had more time there as individuals, we could make more collaborative links for research – not something we have done to date." (A-AF)

4.3.3 Post-delivery

All interviewees noted a negative outcome experienced by themselves and staff generally following delivery as flying faculty with a majority mentioning particular

incidents or problems and raising issues to do with accommodation and travel.

“A two-week visit is actually six weeks work: two for preparation, two for delivery and two spent catching up.” (A-AF)

> Flying faculty visits led most to contextualise their material using local examples, which helped to internationalise the curriculum when back home (Smith, 2012b, p.6).

This highlights the benefits of actually having time within the country to absorb the culture and knowledge of the country.

“They like having us in their country, but you are an outsider coming in, whereas in the UK the students are the outsider.” (B-CU)

Having time to absorb different country’s cultures, surroundings and customs can impact on relationships with UK-based international students and help academics generally to understand UK international student experiences better. By necessity the role of flying faculty means short stays lasting only a few days each and are likely therefore to be too short periods to allow for the phases of adjustment to foreign cultures to be experienced, as outlined in Hofstede's (1997) acculturation curve. It also provides academic staff with a deeper understanding of what it is like for international students leaving their home country to come to study in the UK. In that aspect, it is a useful lesson for academic staff to learn.

There are clearly significant logistical challenges and a need for appropriate professional development for academics involved in transnational teaching.

“A lot of people have seen how stressed/over-worked staff are when they have come back – people are not queuing up to go. He did it because he did not want to go on ‘the blacklist’.” (A-SF)

Only half noted positive outcomes for staff post-delivery. Whilst their universities seem to have been lacking in support generally, the overall response to the actual teaching had some positive notes:

"It is satisfying and good, but very challenging." (A-BP)

"It's given me a great deal of pleasure and my teaching techniques are changing. I like the contact. I like meeting students and batting ideas about." (A-SF)

Such transnational teaching was seen as a way of meeting new people, experiencing different cultures, with opportunities to make connections for research and consultancy links. They also felt that it would aid in internationalising the curriculum and achieve a more global outlook. When looking at the inclusion of work as flying faculty, it seems that there is often lack of consideration to the full extent of time involved in all aspects of flying faculty work:

"What goes on a staff timetable is the amount of hours teaching overseas, so for example there is no allowance for travel time when staff go on trips; home teaching is not always covered." (A-AF)

"In Mauritius in December I needed to give UK students skills feedback – verbal one-to-ones. I was in Mauritius so had to email them all so huge increased workload. We are supposed to call all our personal tutees by telephone re: attendance – from the registers and contact them, so when on a 2-week trip ….. no-one seems to organise stuff while you are away. No-one wants to go on trips here because of the lack of time-allowance."

The final difficulty as far as flying faculty tutors were concerned was the back-log of work often waiting for them on their return home.

"There is no allowance or 'carve-out' on the timetable to develop materials, no travel time allowance, home teaching isn't covered, there's no TOIL. We have to do all these things in term time. It's pressure before I even get there, and while I'm there, I'm always thinking about what's waiting for me when I get back." (A-AF)

Half of the total group raised issues with reference to workload schedules, not just for transnational delivery, but also the impact that this sojourn has on their work when they return to the UK campus. They have to deal with re-scheduled classes, personal tutee appointments, administrative tasks aligned to their UK role. This is an ill-considered aspect of their work and often falls under the ambit of assumption and presumption by the UK institution.

"There is no organisation when I am away. Its spoiled. Students feel let down. The lack of organisation spoiled the whole international job though." (A-SF)

There would also seem to be a perceived lack of fairness amongst some staff with reference to how flying faculty staff are treated as compared with staff working on UK campus:

"staff have travel allowance to go to the next city in UK but not Mauritius." (A-SF)

Only one interviewee from each university noted that there were no actual team meetings and/or debriefing following delivery as flying faculty.

"There are no team meetings – these were abandoned when no-one turned up a few times. They are all so under pressure of work – they have to prioritise and a meeting is way down the list. There is very poor buy-in to team meetings. There is a general culture in the School that meetings are not compulsory – so no apologies are required." (A-AF)

This would potentially alleviate a number of issues if carried out effectively and regularly. Participants from one university noted:

"There are no de-briefings post-trip – this would be good as it would develop a successful product. It would help others going out there." (A-AF)

"I have tried to pass ideas on to HEA Mentor and at staff meetings – but there is no formal process. There are no team meetings – these were abandoned when no-one turned up a few times." (A-SF)

The return home and to work on the UK campus would also seem to have issues which add to any problems which are initiated in-country.

"There is a lot of bureaucracy. My every coffee has to be documented and numbered. You have to wait ages to get the money back, they add it to your payroll – it can be 1 or 2 months." (A-SF)

'Thank you', 'good work' or any affirmation of a job well done was not something that any of the interviewees had experienced on their return to UK campus.

"It would have been great if someone had just said 'thank you'." (A-SF)

Even without the challenges of the actual intensive delivery offshore, it would seem that a major challenge is returning immediately to the UK campus and managing their workloads which have lain fallow during their trip. In a few cases this feeling of non-appreciation was exacerbated by comments of a few of their colleagues questioning: *"Oh, are you off again; have a good time"*, and on their return: *"Did you have a good time?"* added to their feeling that no-one knows what they actually have to do.

4.4 Personal Apprehensions emerging from the interview data

Teaching intensively – long days and limited time for delivery for completion of studies are certainly challenging. Add to this, other tests of working in a different time zone, country and culture, it is an experience outside the norm of working in academia on campus in the UK. The two are not comparable.

"I find it difficult to get into a routine – especially with the time difference I have no sleep pattern. One time I lay awake for hours until 4 am." (B-CU)

Gribble and Ziguras support the comment that ideally:

> . . . from the moment they arrive, academics working in offshore programmes are often placed in testing circumstances and faced with

> challenging situations. Jet lag, differences in climate, diet, health issues and the logistical concerns of transport and accommodation are present from the moment of arrival (Gribble and Ziguras, 2003, p.212).

It would seem that some female flying faculty who have been required to undertake the activity as a lone traveller have additional fears:

"If you are a woman travelling alone, you need a safe environment and to stay at the same place each time there is a visit– and so get used to the hotel staff. You need to know exactly where you are geographically; how to get transport to work, how long it takes to get there; what are the worst times to travel; which are the dodgy areas to avoid." (B-JB)

Again, lone travellers, regardless of gender, tend to be cautious of an unknown environment and different cultures, outside the safe haven of their hotel:

"Just sitting in a hotel room in between sessions is not good. It is not good to be alone" (A-BP).

These issues are noted in Figure 30 at Point 10, the last of the key issues highlighted by the interviewees and relate to pre- and during-delivery stages. There are impacts on individuals that are not necessarily contemplated before academics embark on teaching offshore, and also possibly would not be found acceptable if looked at in the context of UK campus delivery.

"I felt cast adrift because no-one was here in the university. There was no-one to give advice at the Uni. I feel exhausted. I've got to survive. Me!" (A-SF).

Offshore universities tend to work only during the week also, and participants noted that whilst any evening classes that are scheduled may have staff available for enrolment, emergencies and technical support, at the weekend delivery, which is the longest, there is often no-one

"Being alone in a foreign country can be challenging. I don't mean lonely 'alone'. If you are at home – you have your daily habits, down-time, conversations. There you have no intimate relationship with your other half. You can be in company but still alone. I miss the creature comforts from home. I am ready to

go home at the end of 10 days of being in a confined space; there is no coffee pot – I have to go to Starbucks." (B-CU)

There were significant comments made from a personal perspective and which staff felt had a major impact on their lived life whilst working as flying faculty:

"Visits can be lonely and isolating." (A-AF)

"I only have a couple of free hours free time each trip and I need a break. I have one evening off. I don't think this side of the trip is considered. If I talked to the Dean she would probably laugh". (A-BP)

There was legitimate concern across both groups with reference to potentially serious incidents and somewhere to turn for advice when there is a problem. Two examples illustrate the point:

Incident 1

"The cyclone started low but developed. At Level 2 which meant no cars could go on the road. I did not know when it would escalate. If I missed a plane and there is more hotel and flight expenditure who pays? I had no time to get to the airport and the taxi was not insured if it gets to Level 3 – the plane was leaving early because of the storm. I had to take the risk and fly out in the cyclone; dangerous. The flight wasn't cancelled – just brought forward – so I hadn't got any choice.

I had checked out of the hotel. The manager let me go into a room. There are a lot of corrugated huts because the people are quite poor, so there was huge amounts of debris.

There was no-one to contact at the university to check that if I missed the flight – would someone pay for another? There was no-one in the travel office; the Dean was flying into Mauritius.

I didn't want to go there in the cyclone season but I was told I had to; they shouldn't send people out there then because I have got a child.

There should be an emergency help-line; there is insurance, but they are not going to advise." (A-SF)

What should this tutor have expected? Safety, support, financial emergency aid and a point of contact at the UK university. As an employee, a safe place of work is paramount and simple checks on annual weather patterns by the university would have alleviated the serious worry and apprehensions of air

travel in cyclone season. Delivery schedules could and should have been adjusted accordingly. The possibility of additional, unexpected expenses should be addressed and a point of contact for emergencies.

Incident 2

"I was sent to Russia to work and on the way to the university there one Friday I slipped and broke my leg. They insisted it was just a sprain and if I continued with the class which finished at 8 pm they would arrange for me to go to the hospital to check it out. Once x-rayed it was confirmed as a break, I was put in a half plaster cast until I got home.

My passport was being held by the police. I was asked to complete delivery of the module by the partner institution, so had to go every day to teach on crutches.

Although I notified the university in the UK on the Friday when it happened, it was the following Wednesday before someone called back.

I completed the teaching, got a 'fit-to-fly' Cert and flew home. I had to arrange it all myself with some help from a colleague who was also working in Russia at the time.

The UK campus did nothing. No contact. Nothing arranged. 3 plane changes. I was home for a whole week before someone contacted me from the university." (B-JB)

What should this tutor have expected? Contingency plans should be part of any agreement with the partner institution for injury at work and arrangements for repatriation for serious injury. A prompt response from the UK university would have fulfilled the standard required by any caring employer. Two points of contact in two weeks is insufficient. A booklet on 'What to do if...' would have reduced the stress on the individual, as would a proforma of what the home university should do in such an event to aid this employee and/or a designated person to deal with such eventualities. It would seem that no-one took responsibility for this injured academic.

The two incidents were provided by single participants, one from University A, one from University B following their interviews. They wanted someone to know what had happened to them, how frightened they were at the time, and how

they lived through the event. One of them noted that the old adage of *'out-of-sight, out-of-mind'* would seem to be symptomatic of the way that individuals are dealt with when working away from the UK campus as flying faculty offshore. There seems to be no provision for such incidents occurring, no advice, no point of contact. If such incidents had happened on the UK campus, a course of action would be in place with nominated people to contact and follow up procedures. These events, a lone worker in Mauritius, the other in a remote area of Russia, with lack of knowledge or advice of any emergency process, would have been extremely challenging.

Consideration of personal perspectives is clearly a valid point since much of the work takes place at the weekend and evenings, when UK universities are, for all intents and purposes, *'closed'.* Also, there is more often than not a significant time difference, which makes the availability of any senior managers and key decision-makers quite critical if a problem arises and there is no-one available or on call. Other examples of personal impact on staff as a result of an emergency are noted in Figure 31. In such circumstances, the staff concerned are adrift, often alone with no guidance. Some of the apprehensions of staff involved would have been allayed by a 'Survival Pack' containing an institutional credit card, mobile telephone or point of contact to be used in emergencies only. None of these were available. In Smith's research looking at transformative development for flying faculty staff, she notes a resounding *'no'* for institutional support from those interviewed, (Smith, 2012a, 2012b). Gribble and Ziguras, (2003) along with Dunn and Wallace, (2006) also note that this is a common response from flying faculty.

Emergency/Incident	**Resulting problem**	**Impact on flying faculty staff member**
Checked out of hotel,	Missed flight due to adverse weather conditions (typhoon)	<u>No confirmation of who pays and how for:-</u> • for the next flight • temporary new hotel • daily allowance <u>Limited personal finance</u>
Injured soon after arrival	• local police holding passport so difficulty in being repatriated • Friday incident .	• email sent immediately • no point of contact with UK HEI or Insurance Officer until the following Monday. • First contact from HEI was the following Wednesday
Woman travelling alone	• suddenly taken ill on arrival • no-one from UK or host institution to provide any assistance • marooned in accommodation which was poor	<u>No confirmation of who pays and how for:-</u> • enforced/extended stay • no confirmation/authorisation of who pays medical bills, doctor, hospital
Outbreak of serious in-country epidemic	Confined to hotel	<u>No confirmation of who pays and how for:-</u> • eventual rescheduled flight • additional hotel costs • daily allowance
Arrived in China following volcanic eruptions in Iceland.	All flights grounded	<u>No confirmation of who pays and how for:-</u> • extended stay in overbooked hotel • eventual rescheduled flight • additional hotel costs • daily allowance

Figure 31: Examples of emergencies provided by flying faculty tutors from Universities A & B and the focus group, communicated following data collection sessions (Whieldon, 2014).

Smith's interview group, when asked what support they had received answered a unanimous *'none!'*. When asked what would have been helpful, they provided a list, none of which was extraordinary: information on innoculations, food, facts about the partner university, culture, some phrases of local language, basic knowledge of the place they were to visit, a manual. These issues fit with the lower echelons of Maslow's (1943) diagram of hierarchical needs as illustrated in Figure 32 below. "If these needs are not met, it is not easy for flying faculty to fulfil their potential" (Smith, 2012, p.9).

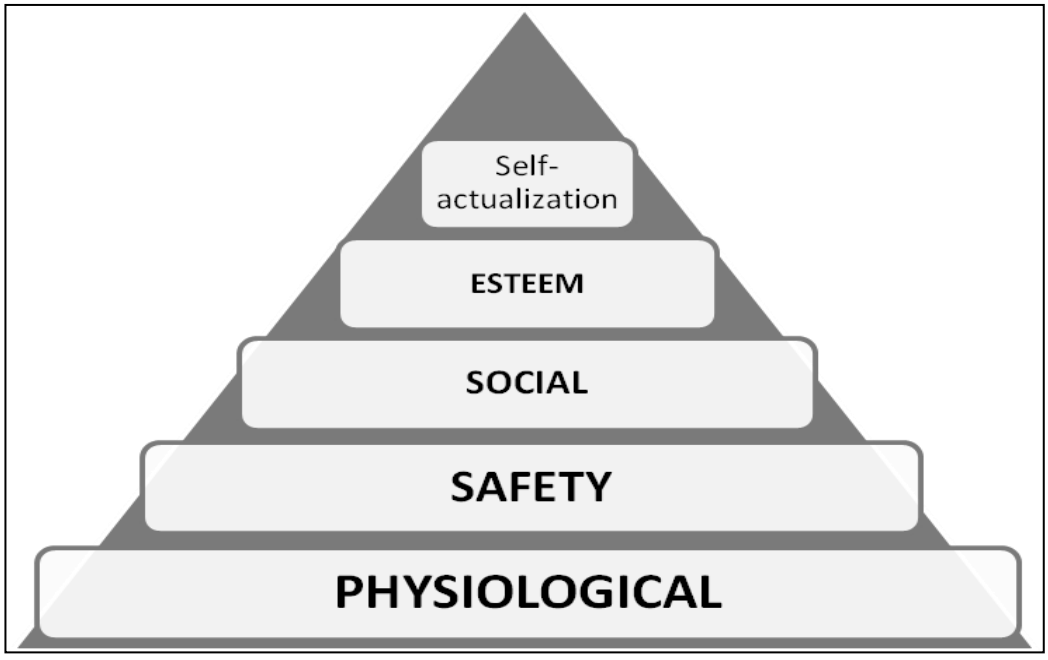

Figure 32: Maslow's diagram based on the hierarchical needs for individual motivation.

Maslow (1943) sought to explain why it is that people are driven by particular needs at particular times and in particular situations. His theory that human needs are arranged in a hierarchy where people will try to satisfy their most

important needs first and then try to satisfy the next important need and so on moving upwards through the triangle may explain why flying faculty in their unique and often inexperienced situation highlight so many apprehensions from personal and pedagogical perspectives. Whilst issues raised by the participants have some personal impact either on them as professional educators or as individual people which can be allocated to one category or the other, there are issues raised which bridge these categories and affect flying faculty from both perspectives. They are organisation issues and experiential outcomes for staff.

4.5 Supportive data from the focus group.

At the initial meeting of the focus group, the majority of the issues raised were similar to the University interviewees and outlined in Figure 33 and therefore supportive of those findings. The key difference was that the interviewees were raising them as problems, while the aim of the focus group was to recognise the problems and then develop solutions and recommendations by way of a guide for staff working as flying faculty offshore. The participant groups confirm that these issues are faced by many academics who find themselves in such situations.

4.6 Research Question 2:

What development needs are required for flying faculty staff?

4.6.1 Focus group data for staff development of flying faculty

Working with a focus group often goes a step further than one-to-one interviews, since there is a supportive structure of having like-minded participants gathered together in a discussion. This self-selected group had over eighty years international experience with roles ranging from senior

lecturer to Professor and Pro-vice Chancellor.

Initial issues: support and training for 'flying faculty' needed pre- during- and post-delivery	
STAGE	**ISSUE**
Pre-delivery	• It is important that UK staff are prepared for the delivery of TNE programmes so that they can effectively deliver a high-quality student experience. • Staff need to be aware that delivering TNE modules as 'flying faculty' involves a different model of delivery and need to plan for this.
During-delivery	• It is useful for the lecturer to have a single point of contact back in the UK, who can help deal with issues faced on the ground, such as students not being able to access resources
Post-delivery	• Linking TNE experience with professional development, reward and recognition; success should be celebrated. • Experience gained from delivering TNE programmes can result in positive changes in teaching practice when back in the UK. • Use staff experienced in delivering TNE programmes to train new staff • Development of a generic training manual/staff handbook could be useful, providing readers with areas of support that should be considered and signposting them to appropriate resources; could be used as part of a training needs analysis • Resources could help with providing consistent training across the organisation. • Need guidance on leadership on overseas programmes • Consider the possibility of incorporating TNE experience into the UK Professional Standards Framework

Figure 33: Data gathered as outline points from meetings of the HEA Focus Group

This additional data, when analysed separately provided a check on the variables raised in the data gathered from the interviewees. The outlines of HEA focus group on staff development for transnational education are indicated in black type in Figure 34; further input needed is indicated in red.

As well as noting the challenges and difficulties encountered by flying faculty, the group also proffered some solutions and answers to the questions that they

raised. Whilst being part of the development of the GPG they also provided relevant issues and responses for the main thrust of this research and data to support answers to the research questions raised. When the data in Figures 33 and 34 were analysed and honed down into simplified sections the results were not dissimilar to the main categories designated as areas of apprehension for staff from the interviews, namely:

- professional issues: preparation of materials, teaching, learning assessment
- personal issues: personal preparation and communication
- academic issues which formed a bridge over both professional and personal categories
- staff development issues

The issues raised by the focus group at the pre-delivery stage agreed with criteria raised by the interviewees: that of lack of preparation for delivery of programmes and the fact that materials for transnational delivery need to be different and planned in advance. At the delivery stage, the group's main concerns related to resources and communication, having a designated point of contact to resolve any problems or difficulties that may arise. Significant focus was directed at the post-delivery stage in an attempt to prevent problems arising and ensuring that the whole approach to staff working as flying faculty is put on a more professional basis.

Key areas 1 and 2, Figure 34 identified that very little was being done across the sector to prepare and support flying faculty, although there was some ad hoc informal mentoring noted.

"Currently there is little available nationally – It's just done on an ad hoc basis at individual HEI's" (NH- Focus Group).

Key Area Identified	Group response
1. What is currently being done?	Very little; unstructured across the sector; ad hoc informal mentoring
2. What areas are needed for staff development for transnational education (TNE)?	Flying Faculty (FF); Collaborative partners; Local tutors who assist and/or deliver CPD? available; PG Cert? (for the future) Administrative staff/librarians/other support staff – UK and offshore partner Currently little available nationally – just ad hoc basis at individual HEI's
3. What should a Good Practice Guide (GPG) contain in the section on Staff Development?	Introductory section – contextualising UK education and different levels; explanations of individual University procedures *What should the rest of the content be?* Check any other international existing guidelines **More resource/information/advice needed on:** **Pre-delivery; During-delivery; Post-delivery** Debriefing; 'talking it through'; post-visit reports, can be very helpful *Would a Template help? What would the content be?* Is offshore teaching focussed on UK/Westerns style of teaching? Some teaching & learning aspects are very UK, eg '*directed learning'; 'reflective practice'; 'critical analysis'* – all need explaining. *Would a 'Glossary of terms help?'* Cultural competence & understanding – can it be generic? *Can it be shared in some way? How? How much?*
4. What resources would help to address staff development?	Effective, well-designed 'Induction' for staff – essential for FF. *What should the content be?* Cultural Guides? Diaries; dates; highlight areas of sensitivity. *Suggested Guides for each country?* Sharing of 'world experience of delivery' *How? Case Studies? Anonymous 'Wisdoms & Experiences Log'?* Checklist for staff and an infrastructure support and practical advice *What should the content be?*
5. Summary of what can be produced for the GPG?	Glossaries *All suggestions for content welcome!* For new FF tutors: *'101 Things I wished I had known'* ; 'Top Tips' *Please contribute to the list; some already received* Tutor awareness – to heighten tutor understanding of the impact of 'words'; language use – no colloquialisms! *List of 'Do's and Don'ts' – please provide examples* Case Studies *All case study examples welcome – anonymised but shared* Action to develop a GPG: - level of resource this is aimed at: pre-set-up and/or already set-up situations - need to separate out information and advice into separate strands for: FF; in-country tutors; support staff Possibility of some sort of 'Incentivisation' – for self-development of staff – possibly linked in with Professional Standards Framework – outlines? *Any ideas?*

Figure 34: Key areas developed by the focus group with additional categories added in the development sessions to provide what is perceived as lacking and what is needed.

Key area 2 Figure 34 also looked at the notion of flying faculty undertaking some continuing professional development or some specific qualification. Key

area 3 focuses specifically on what a GPG should contain and providing a counter for the problems raised by the interviewees by advocating:

"More resources, information and advice is needed on the pre-delivery, during delivery and post-delivery stages" (AL- Focus Group).

Having identified these shortcomings, key area 4 identified what resources would assist in addressing the lack of flying faculty staff development noting the need for *"an effective well-designed induction"* as essential, and guides, sharing of experiences and practical advice along with developmental checklists. As a group they were unanimous in suggesting an institutional *'Wisdoms and Experiences Log'*. Key area 5 focussed on creating a *'Top Tips'* document or *'101 things I wished I had known'* for new flying faculty emphasising just how much information and support individuals need. Other aspects of the key areas highlighted the need for a GPG as an overall aide to flying faculty.

When looked at in diagrammatic form as in Figure 35 it highlights the cyclical impact each of the pre-, during- and post-delivery stages can have. The focus group participants shared their lists of advice, tips, ideas, wisdoms which they had gathered from their own experiences over the years of working with, and as, flying faculty. What Figure 35 demonstrates is the interaction between the three stages of pre-, during- and post-delivery stages highlighted from the focus group data. Thus, if at the 'pre-delivery' stage institutions developed a catalogue of practical knowledge from staff expertise and bespoke materials development, along with appropriate checklists, this could feed into the 'during-delivery' stage. Here, flying faculty as a team, could benefit from corporate-style materials and delivery methods, a 'survival pack' for emergencies and a communication policy with key points of contact with hours of availability. Finally, post-delivery,

mandated debriefings from returning staff, sharing of experiences, writing up of any particular case studies could feed into regular team meetings forming the basis for any review/redraft of preparation documents for the next offshore visit.

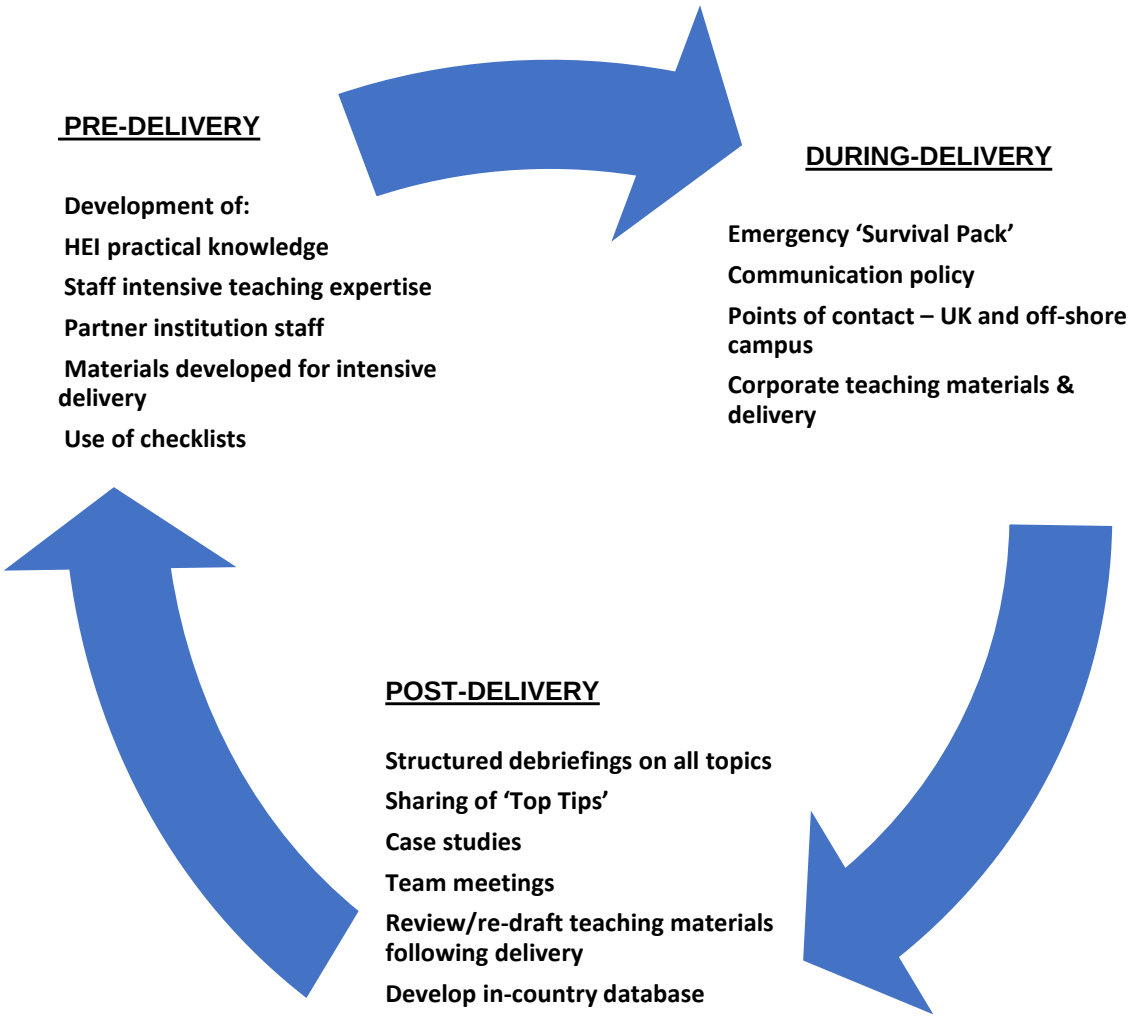

Figure 35: Schematic Chart illustrating themes developed by the focus group, Whieldon (2014)

Some of the questions posed as indicated in red type in Figure 34, for discussion by the group indicated clearly the areas of concern by this group of academics with varying levels of experience of flying faculty. For example:

"*Is offshore teaching focussed on UK/Western style of teaching? Should it be?"*

"Some teaching and learning aspects are very 'UK' and all need explaining clearly to students, administrative staff and any in-country tutors who may be involved in tutorial support, eg, 'directed learning'; 'reflective practice'; 'cultural analysis"

If these are questions raised with relation to flying faculty delivery, then it raises subsequent question of: what provision is made for UK staff to deal with this issue prior to departure for offshore delivery?

Another question raised, and answered by the focus group:

"Should there be an understood and common glossary of terms?

Definitely – YES! But definitions are not enough – it should be built into the programme of study at Induction and echoed throughout; there should be case study/workshop examples of these specific UK requirements, finalised in an 'Assessment Surgery' session before the tutor departs."

Again, the fact that this matter is raised, highlights that none of these activities happen, thus making the delivery by the member of flying faculty so much more difficult. An interesting point was made during the focus group discussions which formed quite a powerful statement going very much to the crux of the matter:

"There are risks posed by poor-quality provision in offshore teaching and learning which are self-evident. Failure at the point of actual delivery invites failure of the collaboration overall as well as damage to the reputation of the provider" (JW- Focus Group)

The fact that it was raised as an important point by the group and discussed at length suggests that it is not something which has been of concern to date to higher education institutions who are involved whole-heartedly in the activity of offshore delivery, partnerships and collaborations.

As well as providing areas of concern which very much aligned with those raised by the interviewees, the participants in the focus group made proposals for actions which they felt would improve the working life of the flying faculty tutor. A number of checklists were developed by members of the group to be considered as an aid to not only flying faculty, but also other staff involved in this type of transnational education. They included programme design checklists, programme delivery checklists, personal checklists, top tips etc.,

There was much interest across the whole group in the development of some type of training manual or handbook which could be used as a training needs analysis with the possibility of this in some way being incorporated into the UK Professional Standards Framework. In many ways, whilst raising similar issues to the interviewee participants, the information and data gleaned from this focus group provided solutions to the issues raised as well as highlighting the issues themselves. It provided a wider demographic to underpin the research in this area through the additional data provided. I believe that they encapsulated the whole essence of the key experiences of all the stakeholders involved.

The resulting development of a significant number of sub-categories provided a natural step to identify the linkages with the data provided from the interviews to provide cohesion across the results from both data collection instruments. The information and data gathered from this focus group provided a useful collection of knowledge which once edited could be shared as the basis for a guide for transnational education participants of both tutors and universities.

4.7 Combined data analysis

To provide a focus and comparator, I listed the issues raised from the six interviewees noted in the left-hand column of Figure 36. I then noted which of these issues were aligned as an issue for the twelve participants of the focus group under the same headings, noted in the middle column. The right-hand column provides a combined total, with a maximum of eighteen. This view of combined data provided an enhanced analysis and clarity of understanding of the different aspects of the subject area of the research. Participant staff were unanimous in raising the issues of: informal pre-visit preparation, materials preparation, teaching and learning issues and negative outcomes for staff with a high number of staff raising issues of delivery, organisation, accommodation and travel, yet there seemed to be less emphasis overall on there being no previous experience or resources, which was interesting.

This combined analysis provided an even clearer picture with possibly the focus group providing enhanced expertise in the area and thus having a more macro view as well as individual micro perspectives from individual stances. It resonates even more clearly with the original basis of this study and some of the research questions raised. I do not believe that I would have had the same understanding, the same conclusions, so clearly if the data from both groups had been merged chronologically or topically ab initio. It is evident that there is a consensus in the overall areas of apprehension for staff involved: lack of mentoring, materials preparation and teaching issues and negative outcomes for staff.

Mutual criteria raised by: Interviewees (6) plus Focus Group (12)	No. of Interviewees raising these issues - Universities A and B **(6)** **SUB TOTAL**	No. of Focus Group participants raising these issues **(12)** **SUB TOTAL**	**COMBINED RESPONSES** **(18)** **TOTAL**
Previous experience	**1**	**12**	**13**
No previous experience	**5**	**-**	**5**
Pre-visit informal briefing/mentoring	**6**	**12**	**18**
Pre-visit formal briefing/mentoring	**2**	**12**	**14**
Personal preparation for visit	**1**	**12**	**13**
Cultural issues	**4**	**12**	**16**
Materials preparation issues	**6**	**12**	**18**
Organisation issues	**5**	**12**	**17**
Teaching and learning issues	**6**	**12**	**18**
Delivery styles	**5**	**12**	**17**
Peer observation	**4**	**12**	**16**
Schedules	**3**	**12**	**15**
Resources	**5**	-	**5**
Accommodation and travel	**5**	**12**	**17**
Personal problems/incidents	**5**	-	**5**
Solutions advice	**4**	**12**	**16**
Positive outcomes for staff	**3**	-	**3**
Negative outcomes for staff	**6**	**12**	**18**
Impact on staff post-delivery	**3**	**12**	**15**
Debriefing/team meetings	**2**	**12**	**14**
Staff training provided	**1**	**12**	**13**
Staff training not provided	**4**	**12**	**16**
Staff incentives	**3**	**12**	**15**

Figure 36: Combined results of the BNIM Interviewees and the Focus Group – using the same categories. The shaded area indicates maximum needs/concerns raised.

The only areas noted as least significant, are those aligned to the issue of whether staff have any previous experience in delivering as flying faculty. This may be because staff themselves when starting out to undertake the role of flying faculty, consider that previous experience is not essential. Resource issues are not noted as an overall high-level problem.

To ensure the clearest picture possible and combining the areas of concern and apprehension from both data sources, the results could be honed into six categories of apprehension: i) personal, ii) cultural, iii) teaching, learning and

assessment, iv) communication and contact, v) staff development, and vi) personal problems/serious incidents., Figure 37.

CORE AND SUB-CATEGORIES OF APPREHENSIONS	Unis A+ B	FOCUS GROUP	Number of times issue mentioned by participants: Universities A and B + Focus Group	TOTAL
1. Personal				
- personal preparation	1	12	13	
- accommodation & travel	5	12	17	**61**
- schedule	3	12	15	
- solutions/advice	4	12	16	
2. Cultural	4	12	16	**16**
3. Teaching Learning & Assessment				
- previous experience	1	12	13	
- no previous experience	5	-	5	
- materials preparation	6	12	18	**92**
- delivery styles	5	12	17	
- teaching	6	12	18	
- resources	5	-	5	
- peer observation	4	12	16	
4. Communication and contact				
- Organisation	5	12	17	**17**
5. Staff development				
- staff training provided	1	12	13	
- staff training not provided	4	12	16	
- formal mentoring of staff	2	12	14	
- informal mentoring of staff	6	12	18	**126**
- staff positive outcomes	3	-	3	
- staff negative outcomes	6	12	18	
- impact post-delivery	3	12	15	
- debriefing/team- meetings	2	12	14	
- incentives	3	12	15	
6. Personal problems/incidents	5	-	5	**5**

Figure 37: Set of condensed core categories and sub-categories from the original set of issues from interviews and focus group sessions. Shaded area indicates maximum needs/concerns

If the numbers and topic areas are then merged, it provides total data numbers which are comprehensive even if simplified in their approach. This analysis of categories and sub-categories are set out in Figure 37, the shaded areas denoting areas of maximum concern.

Pedagogic apprehensions

Pedagogic apprehensions made up of amalgamated data of staff development, core category 5 as the highest: 126 mentions, teaching, learning and assessment, core category 3 ranking second with 92 mentions combined to give 218 mentions overall are best viewed visually in Figure 38. These figures indicate that it is the ability to deliver intensively and the required 'tools of their trade' or lack of them, which are of greatest concern to staff.

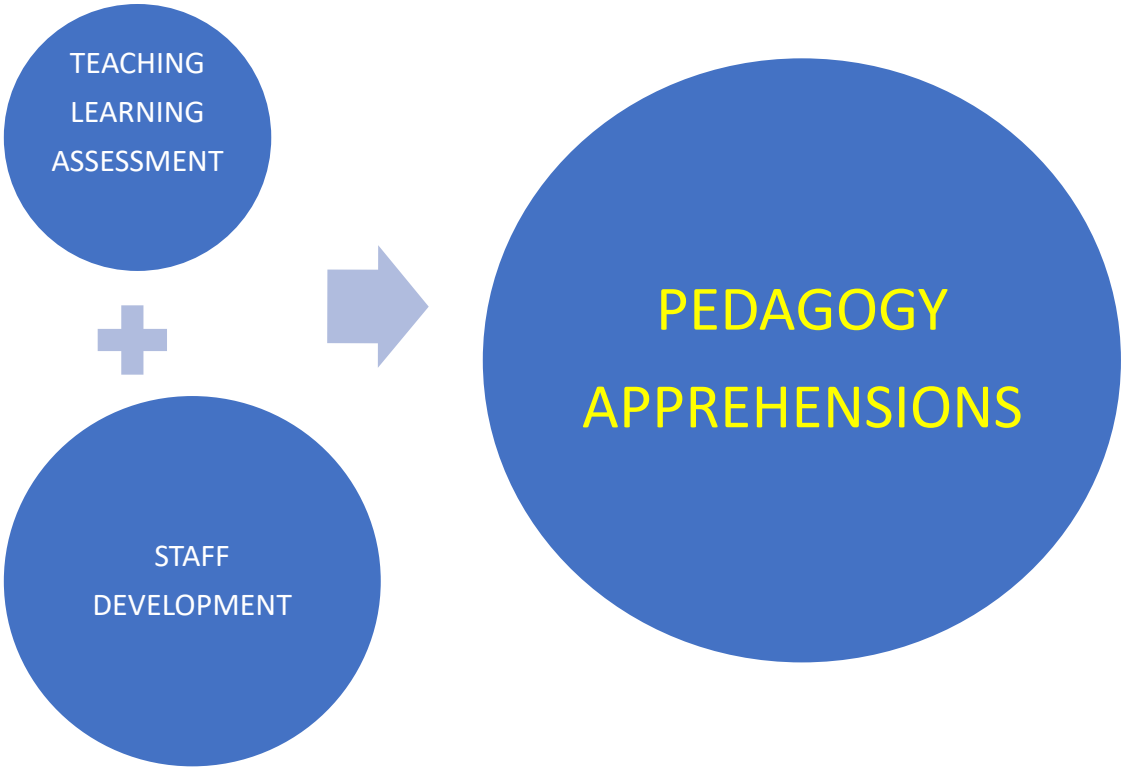

Figure 38: To demonstrate the 2 key areas of pedagogical apprehensions for flying faculty - of teaching and learning and staff development

Personal apprehensions

Third in line numerically are personal apprehensions totalling 99 mentions, in categories 1, 2,4 and 6 These indicators are also best appraised diagrammatically in Figure 39.

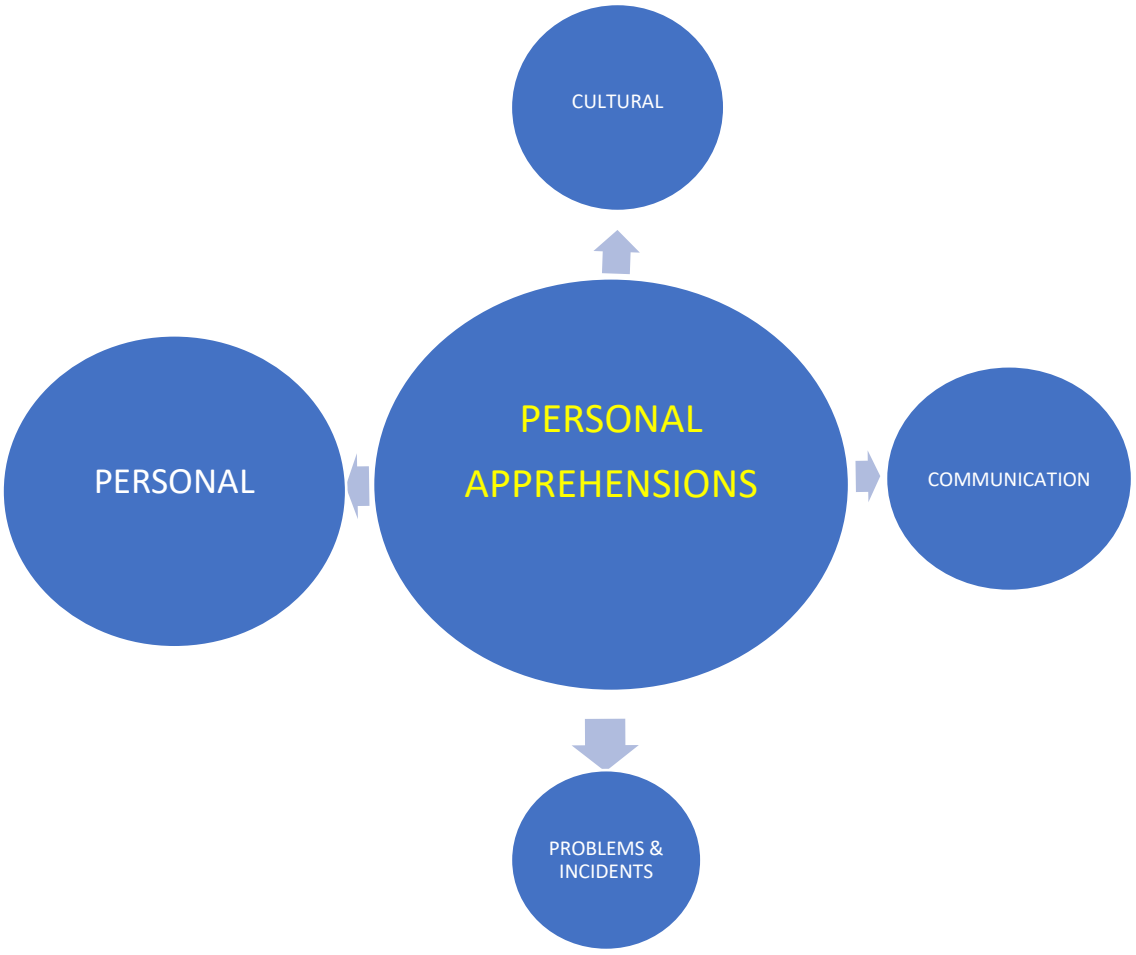

Figure 39: To demonstrate the key areas of personal apprehensions for flying faculty – of personal issues, cultural, communication and specific problems and incidents.

Personal apprehensions of staff involve personal issues, cultural, communication and individual problems and incidents. This evidences well that staff development is very much at the forefront of the minds of those involved in working as flying faculty and register as far more important to them overall than

personal issues raised. They do in fact raise the greatest apprehensions for them to a much greater extent than any personal apprehensions. It is worth noting that while serious incidents are low in number, the impact on the individual and the sending university could be very serious.

4.8 Summary

This chapter has examined the participant perceptions of the apprehensions of academic staff working as flying faculty offshore. It has done so through the lenses of personal and pedagogic viewpoints of individuals at micro level and senior practitioners with expertise at a macro level. The analysis illustrates the different emphasis and subsequent consequence of how people perceive and perceived their situations. These views, gathered from two different data-providing sources represented the varying importance accorded to their personal situations, their expectations and the actuality of the work and lifestyle impacts.

Findings in this chapter have revealed that participants are affected by their unusual teaching situation and the support and preparation, or lack of it, provided by the sending institution. While their views could have been influenced by a number of factors such as their personal interests and/or prior experiences in higher education, it would seem that their uncertainties and beliefs about how to deliver offshore and their personal circumstances whilst doing so were key to their apprehensions.

Overarching findings are that without the appropriate professional development and preparation from all aspects of this intensive delivery offshore, there are

significant difficulties for staff without the infrastructure support that they would have on campus in the UK. Additionally, without the appropriate personal preparation and/or experience of offshore delivery, the essential needs expected to be provided by the educational employer to diminish basic apprehensions makes the task of successful delivery of these offshore programmes of study much harder than need be. The result is that academics will feel that the possibility of reaching Maslowian goals of personal fulfilment, rather than just carrying out the task, an unachievable aspiration.

Whilst this study may be seen as no more than a snap-shot of the particular sector as a whole, the current status quo for those involved as flying faculty is clearly not demonstratively the most effective basis on which to build a new educational direction for university programme delivery of this type. The data providers were from universities from different geographical regions of the UK, new and established in this mode of delivery. So, whilst as with any other study, it can be defined as a 'moment in time', it would seem that the responses, issues raised, concerns and apprehensions are those at the forefront of the mind of academics involved in flying faculty delivery. In addition to the data which supports this study, it is clear that sufficient published researchers have come to similar conclusions:

> Universities have an obligation to ensure that the knowledge and skills of experienced academics are passed on to staff who are new to transnational education, or new to a particular programme or offshore learning environment (Gribble and Ziguras, 2003, p.214).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The choice of research area and pedagogical investigation for this study was influenced by my own ontological background and initial general observations of academics involved in transnational education as flying faculty and the need to elicit the extent of the impact of this work on those individuals. The study looked at their concerns relating to delivery of programmes of study offshore which was summarised in the language of the participants as *'apprehensions'*, pedagogic and personal. A review and examination of the literature devoted to the topic of transnational education but focussing specifically on work undertaken by flying faculty and contextualising their 'fit' within the framework of higher education, and the challenges involved, was useful but limited. The purpose of this study was to provide evidence-based research to make a contribution to knowledge to further encourage and promote change. While the initial sample involved six participants, the involvement of a focus group provided a sufficiently wide demographic, geographically, institutionally and positionally to provide a representative group of those academics involved working as flying faculty.

The data provided raised some strong concerns. The responses indicated significant personal pedagogic and practitioner viewpoints and illustrated the additional pressures under which individual members of flying faculty both lived and worked during their sojourns teaching offshore; they were varied and individual, but had a number of common themes. This study found that respondents from across the institutions involved, suggested that there is little staff development available; it is provided primarily on an ad hoc basis within individual institutions, faculties, departments and schools.

The key purpose of this study was to identify whether answers were provided to the objectives and research questions set, a principle highlighted by Baptiste (2001): in that the researcher should always consider objectives, the purpose of the research questions and what they generate, whether it be hypothesis or more simply description, explanation, understanding or some change in the phenomena under investigation. Through the results of the qualitative data gained, coded and analysed I believe that this has essentially been done.

The sources for the data gathered in line with the objectives and research questions leading to conclusions and recommendations are as indicated in Figure 40. The data from the university sample participants provides responses to objectives 1, 2 and 3, and research question one. This data highlights the problems involved from a researcher-detached point of view due to the BNIM methodology used supported by commentary from the focus group and the literature review.

The focus group with the enhanced demographic and national catchment provide responses to objective 2 and research question two, noting the problems that prevail and providing solutions. This data was achieved with increased involvement by me as researcher since I was leading the group concerned. While the data was obtained from these two separate sources, there is a clear symbiotic relationship of mutualism from an academic perspective between these interested parties which allows me to bring together the views of the professionals involved in the day-to-day work as flying faculty with the focus group who have more of an overview.

Research objectives:	Response provided from: Prime source	Secondary source	Research Question
Objective 1: What examples can be found from a sample of higher education institutions, of training and/or preparation for staff who engage in transnational education?	Sample from 6 participants from 2 universities – A and B	Data from cross sector Focus Group Literature review	1 In what ways does the experience of working as flying faculty affect the staff involved - professionally and personally?
Objective 2: What are the challenges and opportunities for staff in delivering transnational education as flying faculty through intensive modes of delivery?	Sample from 6 participants from 2 universities – A and B	Data from cross sector Focus Group Literature review	
Objective 3: In what ways does the experience of working as flying faculty affect the staff involved personally and professionally?	Sample from 6 participants from 2 universities – A and B	Data from cross sector Focus Group Literature review	
Objective 4: What future development needs are required for flying faculty staff?	Data from cross sector Focus Group	Sample from 6 participants from 2 universities – A and B Literature review	2 What future development needs are required for flying faculty staff?

Figure 40: Indicating sources of data gathered to provide answers, conclusions and recommendations to the research objectives.

This study attempts to fill gaps in knowledge noting the effect on the work–life balance experiences of academics who undertake short-term international teaching assignments as flying faculty both from a representative and also a

typical community point of view. In addition to the data gathered, a number of writers in this area provided information to support the questions raised which prompted this study and which are detailed in Chapter two.

5.2 Objective 1: What examples can be found from a sample of higher education institutions, of training and/or preparation for staff who engage in transnational education?

It is clear that the work undertaken by flying faculty requires meticulous preparation and a pedagogical diversity that they may not have experienced before. Leask, (2004) notes that transnational teaching, requires specific and unique skills. Since the delivery of the intensive course is offshore, other difficulties can be magnified as tutors are subjected to additional challenges. Comprehensive, relevant information is needed by the flying faculty tutor before departure: if hot water is available for a few hours only each day; if air pollution is severe enough to trigger an asthma attack; if local cuisine presents challenges for vegetarians; if certain prescribed/ non-prescribed medication is illegal in the host country. Such information pre-travel would allow staff to concentrate on delivering the educational programme to the highest standard rather than having to divide their limited time with personal and/or domestic worries. It would thus seem that there is an increased obligation on the sending institution employer to manage the situation and prevent their employees feeling threatened, or unconvinced of the organisations desire to meet the basic physiological and security needs.

Pressure of time and limitations of hourage for delivery are relentless for flying faculty. There is no room for lack of preparation or *'learning as they go along'*. Even those who survive the experience, can be left feeling that their fleeting

interaction with students was superficial and unrewarding and out of balance with the necessary and exhausting process (Wilkes and Lee, 1991). What should be an exhilarating experience of intimate contact with a different country, culture and students can become an ordeal for the inexperienced flying faculty staff. Several of the staff involved in the study referred to the *'job being spoiled'* by the approach or attitude of senior managers. It was a clear point made from the data from both sources, that across academia, the infrastructure and/or support for transnational education and flying faculty is varied.

The research highlighted that the multi-faceted impacts resulting from apprehensions and experiences of flying faculty, highlighted a need for those promoting this style of educational delivery offshore, to consider the implementation of some structured mode of preparation and support for this academically entrepreneurial group. It is hoped that in some way the results of this work might not only influence flying faculty practitioners themselves to require more support from their higher education employers but also highlight the need for such organisations to take a more pro-active role to ensure staff are best prepared to carry out their teaching roles as successfully as possible and thus prolong the carefully negotiated educational links with valued offshore collaborative partners with whom they are engaged.

An interesting point, revealed when looking at a summary of the data, was that one of the least areas of concern was the issue of *'no previous experience'*. It seemed that overall it was not considered a major issue by those involved as flying faculty. One could conclude from this that most staff would be prepared to experience a flying faculty role, but would expect appropriate preparation,

training, mentoring and guidance. This would then offset much of the noted negative outcomes for staff and ensure that it is the teaching experience and professional development of the tutor that is the focus and of the same importance as the partnership contractual commitment and fiscal returns. Whilst this monetary focus is mentioned as a trigger for higher education institutions embarking and being involved in the increase of transnational education, the detail required is potentially the subject of further study. Dunn and Wallace (2006) highlight the need for pre-departure training for flying faculty and learning to teach offshore and Gribble and Ziguras (2003) have undertaken studies of the preparedness and experiences of Australian academics for transnational teaching. Gopal asks the question:

> If they (*academic staff*) are not prepared to teach in a cross-cultural, globally diverse setting, then how can they provide an equitable educational environment for their students? (Gopal, 2011, p374).

The answer to this question raised by Gopal is simply that they cannot.

Although Arkoudis, (2006) and Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, (2010) provide some practical guidance on actual delivery and presentation, it seems relatively small input to the problem as a whole. It is certainly an area of significant concern. There is noted a deal of talking, debating and conference focus on the matter during the last decade, but no actual practical advice or solutions. There is still no clear evidence of provision for academic staff working as flying faculty to develop the necessary additional skills other than by actual experience, self-motivated reading and research, trial and error, or some form of informal mentoring by staff who had already survived the experience. It is best summed up by one of the interview participants:

“In terms of all of these teaching visits we have simply learned as we’ve gone along. So, we haven’t had any training, we haven’t had any kind of development for these teaching trips.” (A-AF)

The whole infrastructure that is provided on campus for UK delivery of a module or programme of study is not and cannot be available to the same extent when providing the same studies offshore, however much both institutions try to make provision. Hence the additional concerns and apprehensions raised by those participants involved in this study of: organisation, delivery styles, accommodation and travel, cultural issues, personal preparation, staff training and schedules. The amount of interest nationally and internationally in transnational education as evidenced in conferences, funded projects and interest by the Higher Education Academy (HEA), indicates that not only is some preparation for these educational pioneers needed but that it is surprising that a more structured approach has not been taken to date. The Maslowian diagram Figure 32 of pyramidal steps to self-achievement would be more akin to almost unachievable mountain summits. Jet lag, differences in climate, culture, diet and health issues and logistical concerns of transport and accommodation are present from the moment of arrival. Failing to overcome these first issues means they would fail at the first step of the pyramid and since progression along this hierarchical pathway of achievement is iterative, they would be prevented from the final step of self-actualisation from the beginning.

It is also worthy of note that although some higher education institutions may have been delivering transnational education programmes by flying faculty for some years, it is a fact that newer participant institutions are becoming involved, providing greater comparisons for those collaborative partners who are coming to the end of existing partnership agreements. Currency of pedagogy and

developments in quality control at the point of delivery, the tutor, should therefore be recognised as key. It was felt by the study participants generally, that failure at the point of actual delivery invites failure of the collaboration overall as well as the reputation of the provider. Leask noted that:

> teaching offshore is an intellectual challenge and an emotional journey, one which requires academic staff, as strangers in a strange land, to come to terms with the perceptions that staff and students …. have of them, with the difference and similarities … that confront them and challenge their stereotypes and prejudices, and which can lead to feelings of frustrations, confusion and disorientation (Leask, 2004, p.3)

5.3 Objective 2: What are the challenges and opportunities for staff in delivering transnational education as flying faculty through intensive modes of delivery?

By the very term used to describe this group of academic staff: 'flying faculty', it explains that their role is to 'fly-in', deliver a programme and 'fly-out'. Swenson explains that "with more than half of all students working full-time, year-round and needing to stay in their own country, instruction needs to take place regardless of time and place" (Swenson, 2003, pp.83-84). Therefore, the delivery has to be done 'intensively' – a totally different pedagogical concept for those used to teaching by traditional methods. The challenges and opportunities of this work was originally highlighted by Jais et al., (2015) who discussed the work-life balance experiences of academics who undertake short-term international teaching assignments. In addition to the data gathered, a number of writers in this area provided information to support responses and answers to the questions raised which prompted the study.

Clark and Clark (2000) discussed the promises and pitfalls of intensive teaching offshore and Debowski (2003) looked particularly at the challenges faced by individuals involved in this work and which corresponded to a number of areas

highlighted by the data gathered throughout the course of the study. The requirement to develop specific skills for teaching in an international setting is discussed by a number of authors, but generally undertaken from a cultural perspective. However, the simple acknowledgement that this is a discrete area of pedagogy could be a starting point for some strategic and structured development for flying faculty staff. Intensive teaching requires a particular learning environment and a highly effective, specially trained tutor. It is clearly an area of concern and also need. With the expansion of transnational education, it is important that UK universities accept the fact that the home-based expertise that their staff have, do not afford the requisite transferable skills necessary to not only deliver the same programmes offshore, but to be successful in doing so.

Participants in the study were quite vocal in their comments; with needing to know ‘how’ to deliver programmes so intensively which not only involves new skills and techniques but requires the ability to cope with significant other extrinsic but allied issues and demands. It is surprising that staff continue to undertake such transnational work, but it seems that generally they relish the challenge, though some do opt not to travel again, which is a pity and mostly for the wrong reasons. The pedagogic challenges along with the personal challenges are, for some, overpowering. The result is the potential loss of a member of staff from the team who could, with appropriate support and professional development, have developed their international delivery skills. Having then experienced all the challenges, they could then act as a mentor for others new to such experiences, thus building up a sound community of practice, not just within their own institution, but also across the sector.

It is noted that the data from the interviewee participants from both universities focussed on the tutor as a key issue: pre-visit briefing (or lack of it), materials preparation issues, teaching and learning issues and negative outcomes for staff. This was supported by commentary from the focus group and clearly indicates the same areas of concern and/or apprehension as the selected university samples. A word which was regularly used by participants in the study was *'apprehension(s)'.* Sometimes these were pedagogic, sometimes personal, but they clearly affected their confidence and ability to deliver in this new environment. Flying faculty tutors themselves do not necessarily appreciate what is involved when undertaking the task for the first time. An incident related to me by one of the participants in the study may be a useful exemplar and is detailed as Incident 3.

Incident 3

A popular and successful UK lecturing Professor agreed to teach offshore for the first time. He was offered mentoring to prepare teaching materials, provided with samples of a teaching file, instructions of length of days teaching in number of hours, breaks etc., He was also offered the opportunity to observe tutors who were delivering by the same intensive methods on the UK campus. He declined, saying that he understood what was needed and was preparing accordingly. When on site in Hong Kong at the collaborative partner institution, the schedule was as follows:

- Saturday 1pm until 9.30pm
- Sunday 9.30am until 6.30pm
- Tuesday 6.30pm until 9.30pm
- Thursday 6.30pm until 9.30pm
- Saturday 1pm until 9.30pm
- Sunday 9.30am until 6.30pm

1-hour lunch break: Sunday + 15-minute tea breaks each Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday.

This incident was based on a specialised subject professor's first experience as a member of flying faculty teaching offshore. He was very experienced in teaching on UK campus and had also experience of acting as an expert witness in court cases. Whilst he felt that it was an opportunity in which he wanted to be involved, the summarised details demonstrate well the unexpected challenges and lack of understanding and experience of what delivering by intensive modes of delivery mean. Although he was very experienced and had much success in traditional delivery in the UK, he found that by 6.30 pm on the first Sunday of delivery, he had run out of material. He had lectured for eight hours on the Saturday and two sessions of four hours on the Sunday. He knew no other way. He spent most of the ensuing free time available to him, in the host university library gathering more materials for the next classes, with an increasing photocopying bill for the UK home university concerned. The result was a number of student complaints that he lectured for hours at a time and although they had much respect for his knowledge and status, the following sessions found steady reduction in numbers of attendees and not a very good personal report in the International Course Committee feedback. It is clear that he had not appreciated the differences in intensive delivery required.

Smith (2009) particularly highlighted transnational teaching experiences as an under-explored territory for transformative professional development, analysing motivations, challenges and opportunities experienced as flying faculty (Smith, 2012a). Whilst as a result of a few published articles there is a raised awareness, the literature, especially from a UK perspective is limited that actually puts together the challenges for staff of extensive travel and living, even

if only temporarily, in a foreign country, with the isolation and responsibility and the added task of somehow absorbing the intricacies of a pedagogic methodology which can be alien to them.

5.4 Objective 3: In what ways does the experience of working as flying faculty affect the staff involved personally and professionally?

Staff involved in working as flying faculty have a number of difficulties to overcome from both a personal and professional perspective. It is a huge climb for staff, working without structured support from their institution, to climb from the bottom level of basic needs to the heights of self-actualisation as illustrated by Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943), Figure 32 previously. To demonstrate this, I have taken the personal and professional criteria to produce a step-change ladder of aspirations for flying faculty staff, from basic needs to self-fulfilment, based on data provided through the journey of this research study, Figure 41. On the right-hand shaded area are Maslow's steps, normally shown in triangular form; on the left are the criteria pertaining to flying faculty, their apprehensions and growth potential.

Translated into the 'needs' that face flying faculty when delivering offshore, it may be seen as a stepped process involving personal needs and a variety of apprehensions as basic and psychological needs (steps 1, 2 and 3) and new pedagogy needs as psychological and self-fulfilment needs (steps 3, 4 and 5). Since the higher stages are dependent on achievement of the basic steps, it is a realistic assumption that staff undertaking delivery of programmes of study offshore as flying faculty are not able to perform as professional educators to the best of their ability. The basics are missing. They are not being supported

by the sending institution. A building, built to last, cannot have poor foundations. It will not subsist long-term.

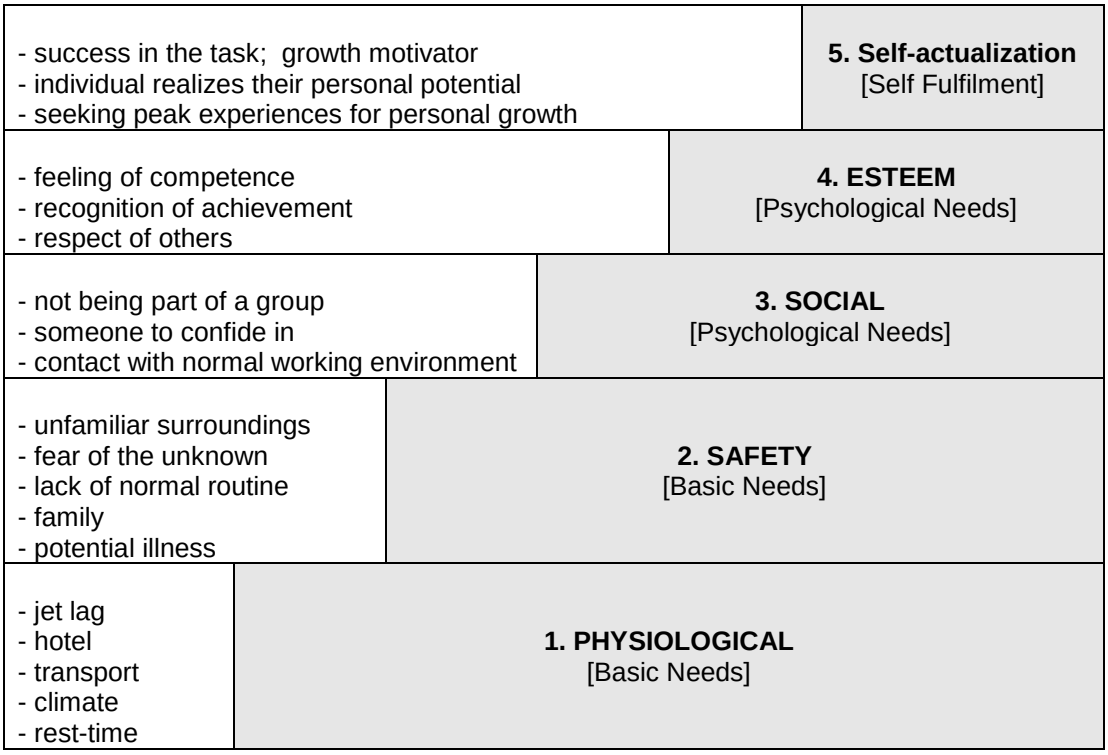

Figure 41: Step diagram after Maslow adapted by Whieldon (2014)

By addressing the physiological needs or issues as much as possible, fulfilment of the basic steps provides the opportunity to move on and reach the top steps of esteem and self-actualization more readily than having to fight to fulfil what are essential the basics of this particular working life. It is also essential that the working environment should be perceived as free from threats or dangers, or at least as much as possible

From the data gathered and analysed for this study there is clear evidence that staff generally welcome the opportunity for personal and professional development that working as a flying faculty tutor offshore can give. Some even

used the words ‘exciting’, exhilarating’ ‘re-energising’ as far as their teaching was concerned. However, these positive feelings were often overwhelmed by the practicalities of the situation(s) in which they found themselves.

Participants noted that it is the significant number of issues which they have to deal with that results in problems. They feel not only unprepared and shocked at the relentless teaching hours but as one participant said: *‘there is no-one to turn to when I have a problem’.* They cannot dial a direct line to IT services, printing, student services and other areas of support that they would take for granted on the UK home campus. Not only that, but due to different time zones and the fact that much of the teaching is done at the weekends or in the evenings, they are often completely alone, both from a UK campus and a host country partnership perspective and have to survive by their own strength of character and ability to improvise.

Debowski in his speech delivered at the 17th Australian International Education Conference noted that there were a number of often unrecognized consequences affecting university academic staff involved in the practical implementation of the move to increase the export of education offshore. He went on to highlight that:

> This approach requires staff to perform effectively in an increasingly diverse setting as temporary expatriates overseas. While there is significant pressure to enrich the university funding and student base through internationalization, there needs to be stronger recognition of the impact of these processes on academics and support staff, and by implication, on the supportive infrastructure which should be provided to such staff (Debowski, 2003).

As a first-time deliverer as flying faculty, the main concerns indicated were at the ‘during-delivery’ and ‘post-delivery’ stages, since to some extent they were unaware of what, if anything, should be available as preparation before embarking on the educational sojourn offshore. They had no idea what to expect. It is only when they have lived through that first experience that they realise what they do not know and what they need to know to make things more effective for themselves as the deliverer of the programme and also the students. This clearly affected their confidence and ability to deliver in this new environment.

It was noted that it was at the delivery and post-delivery stages where staff felt most vulnerable and unsupported, both from a professional and personal perspective. Their concerns at the delivery stage, professionally, focused on all aspects of teaching involving materials, preparation, delivery styles, organisation and schedules. This is in fact the basis of their work which additionally has to be condensed into a very short period of time; an activity of itself often alien to them. All felt pressure and a level of continual apprehension, at a time when they also had the additional pressures from a personal perspective. They were in a foreign country, often alone, with language difficulties, jet lag, food issues. They had to adapt and quickly to so many things: where are they going to live for the short period; is it safe; what transport is available to get to and from work; if something happens – who do I contact and how?

Having survived their flying faculty experience, what of their post-delivery experiences? Professionally, for most, it would seem that there is no de-briefing

session. They had completed the task. They felt that generally no-one was particularly interested in their experience. The principle of reflection and *'what went well; even better if….'* simply did not take place. Thus, little learning could take place from a peer perspective and the idea of establishing an institutional community of practice of flying faculty staff was unachievable.

From a personal perspective, since most staff had to deal with classes re-scheduled on the UK campus, administration tasks, personal tutor responsibilities and the whole set of processes not able to be undertaken while delivering offshore, added to the pressure. Thus, any 'lessons learned' were set aside and lost. Financially, for some of the staff, problems of reclaiming expenses for food, internal travel and normal subsistence costs made it more than difficult, with repayment through university systems taking up to three months, and then only on production of all receipts. So, whilst being at their most vulnerable, many staff felt penalised for expanding their personal portfolio of educational experiences.

However, while personal criteria and problems are of some concern, the fact that tutors want to have more knowledge and develop a wider skills' set to teach intensively offshore, demonstrates their on-going professional approach. Their greater concern for the delivery of their educational programme to the students at the expense of any personal problems that may occur, even though it may affect their enthusiasm to be involved in the future is to be applauded. They are also under pressure to ensure the success of the delivery of each module and programme delivered with the offshore partner, not only from their own personal achievement, but from the perspective of the UK institution, their employer, but

also the partner institution and the students enrolled. These flying faculty tutors are often the sole representative of their university.

As Debowski (2003) notes, staff are required to perform effectively in diverse settings offshore. In a situation of combined flying faculty and local tutors delivering a programme, they are expected to serve as exemplars and mentors for the local tutors hoping to gain experience of Western approaches to higher education delivery. A difficult task when they may have little or no experience themselves. In this situation it is important that they demonstrate best practice for the benefit of the staff and the students offshore. It is clear that flying faculty have much to live up to if these are the expectations. Anything less may be perceived as failure and provide poor feedback for the course, the tutor and ultimately the higher education institution concerned. It is clear that for the most part, the prospect of undertaking this work can be daunting, leading to periods of disconnectedness, which can be exacerbated as the academic tries to deal with the backlog of tasks and work accrued during the sojourn to work offshore. Having said that, the reality may be that the activity is often stimulating from a personal and professional perspective. The experience leads most staff to internationalize their curriculum, something which is at the forefront of most higher education institutions' teaching and learning strategy.

5.5 Objective 4: What future development needs are required for flying faculty staff?

Staff development was seen by far as the most significant issue of note for those involved in this study. It would seem from the data provided by the participant sample and focus group that institutions themselves are somewhat

reluctant in taking up the challenge to ensure staff development in this area other than a *'learning by doing'* approach. If this staff development need is ignored, it is obvious that problems will intensify and increase. International and institutional demand to fulfill requests for expansion of the number of programmes available offshore may not be able to keep pace with the ad hoc experiential learning that has been relied on to date for quality of delivery at source. However, without the necessary staff development, how is this to be achieved?

Developing staff teams with expertise as flying faculty was seen as a key to the success of higher education expansion internationally. Although there were a number of added questions: how to build the capacity of staff (both flying faculty and in-country tutors); how to provide an opportunity to look at different aspects of staff activities and development at all stages of their experiences. By looking practically at the impact of those experiences on personal and professional development, all participants of the study and particularly the focus group thought it possible to set guidelines, that currently do not exist, and look at what *'is'* in place and what *'should'* be in place.

One suggestion made was the need for some type of *'Cultural Guide'* to be made available for staff to include calendars or schedules highlighting special dates, module delivery dates for the year, and assessment deadlines including re-sits. Highlighting areas of sensitivity was also seen as key information by flying faculty with possibly a proforma guide for each country to be visited. The development of an informal *'wisdoms and experiences log',* a true sharing of best practice, case study examples and the use of *'Checklists'* for staff was

seen by all the study participants as a necessity. The idea of checklists and sources of key information for staff to include points of contact, including at weekends, and other practical advice was also seen as essential. Whilst undertaking this research I developed a checklist dealing with personal issues and difficulties. This was up-dated and collated following additional feedback from the participants involved. It is very much a developmental document and quite practical but provides a focus for the member of academic staff and can be adapted to individual institutions, circumstances and countries. Whilst useful, it is not exhaustive and as issues arise, they can be added to, to assist others in the future.

Staff development would seem to be one of the key areas and yet there is little or scant attention given to it. For UK on-campus staff, there is not only a staff development programme stipulated for staff through the teaching and learning strategy advocated as part of the standard five-year plan, but also is an area scrutinised by national quality standards. Hopefully, this will be alleviated in the near future by some organised development for staff in this specialist area of transnational delivery by flying faculty. Although Arkoudis (2006) and Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (2010) provide some practical guidance on actual delivery and presentation, it seems relatively small input to the problem as a whole.

It would seem that from the responses of the interviewees: they do learn and develop following their experiences as flying faculty. However, it is very ad hoc, and more by accident than design and ultimately rests with the character of the individual to survive the experience and develop, rather than through the

provision of any structured support, preparation or organised staff development. Whilst such experiential learning has a value, it is not appropriate that it should be such an ‘accidental’ outcome for an educational activity that is so key, both academically and fiscally, to higher education institutions for the future. According to the participants of this study, there is no prescriptive preparation or training, either formal or informal provided for this offshore transnational education, yet this is evidenced as a key growth area.

5.6 Limitations of the study

One limitation of the study might be identified in the scope of the study, namely the size of the sample and the disciplines and institutions in which participants worked. Under normal circumstances, I could agree with this, since my own criticism of (Smith 2012a, 2012b) was that the participant group of 5, all senior male academics, had a propensity to skew findings and therefore any analysis undertaken. Small numbers can be perceived as unrepresentative. However, the sample that I used for this research, of six individual participants had some added advantages. They were from two universities in different geographical locations in the country and made up of 5 females and 1 male. The level of experience of both the universities and the participants was varied from relatively new to experienced. The addition of the focus group drawn nationally from higher education institutions provided varied demographic and levels of seniority and validation for the study. The focus group definitely provided a wider perspective and also underpinned much of what the individual interviewees recognised. It was interesting to examine the data from both, first of all separately, then amalgamating the responses to provide a thorough picture of the issues and problems faced. I believe that it was important to analyse the data in this way as it was important for me as a participative practitioner

not to influence the analysis and outcomes in any way. I believe that by dealing with the research data in this way I achieved some answers.

A number of issues have been highlighted which are important to understanding the findings and analysis in the study based around the questions posed. Clearly, the purpose was to understand the challenges and opportunities for staff in delivering transnational education as flying faculty through intensive delivery and identifying the resulting key problems. Additionally, the extent of the impact, if any, on staff of this activity and finally what are the identified needs for this potential community of practice for the future? I believe that as a result of this research, this study presents an interpretation of data and material gathered from samples which, although it may be seen as just 'a moment in time', could be argued as being a truly representative sample of what *'is'*. This is also supported by the literature.

5.7 Originality of the research

The purpose of this study was to investigate and provide a new view or understanding which could potentially initiate change, provide a contribution to knowledge, or at least encourage a community of practice which could act as an advocate for change. In attempting to address some of the issues a number of critical practical steps needed to be taken. The resulting hybrid using BNIM methods of qualitative research for data gathering and subsequent deductive data analysis which provided the best solution to suit this study. It was also important to give consideration to the fact that teaching, by its very nature, is a personal activity. The participants had to trust me when making comment and admissions about their professional roles, abilities, fears, concerns and wishes.

The additional bonus of leading the HEA focus group working in exactly the same area, was unforeseen at the beginning of the study. These additions coupled with my own experience as a time-served flying faculty member and therefore professional practitioner made the study more effective. However, it was necessary to make some preliminary admissions as the interested researcher. These are that:

- I have some knowledge of this subject matter from personal experience
- I have additional knowledge through a research of the literature on the subject
- I would like answers to the questions raised, even if it is negative

In this way I acknowledged my subjectivity but used it as a positive instead of a negative and adopted a reflexive approach to best accommodate the data and information.

5.8 Contribution to knowledge

It was important at the outset to endeavour to make a contribution to knowledge for the community of practice that is flying faculty and also their university employers. Eraut (1994) viewed professional knowledge as multidimensional and lists the different facets of such knowledge as knowledge of people, situational knowledge, knowledge of professional practice, conceptual knowledge, process knowledge and self-control knowledge. It is important to view this list from the perspective of the subject matter of this research – the temporary lived lives of flying faculty. From the results of the data gathered and analysed, individuals working as flying faculty subscribe to the significance of such professional knowledge as a minimum requirement to enable them to fulfil their work offshore. The general feeling from the participants in this study, is that higher education institutions do not. This may be for a number of reasons:

lack of enthusiasm for any staff development initiative, lack of commitment to fund it appropriately or lack of understanding of what is involved. It would seem that often the institutional focus is on looking at short-term returns rather than the longer-term benefits.

By the very nature of the delivery of programmes, offshore, this transnational teaching as flying faculty opens up new and different areas of experience for staff. Whilst this may be seen as a bonus for some, Debowski (2003) notes that it has potentially become an onerous demand for busy academics. The lack of time for reflection, peer discussion and academic sharing of best practice precludes any possibility of establishing a community of practice and the resulting shared understanding. Participant responses note the pressures of time, re-scheduled classes etc., as the cause. There is thus little time for specialist and structured professional development for the individuals. Keay et al., (2014) note that there is a need for training and support for staff. Although Smith (2009; 2012a; 2012b) and my study, focus on UK flying faculty per se, there have been a number of USA and Australian writers and authoritative bodies who over a time have raised some of the issues highlighted in the questions I raised as a focus for this study. I believe that the data produced, the findings and analysis should be recognised as a serious contribution to knowledge which engenders the need for change across the sector with at least some institutions taking pro-active steps. This knowledge can provide a starting point from which to move forward. The caveat is that it must be undertaken with an understanding of practitioner experiences in the wider higher education context.

5.9 Recommendations for practice

The recommendations which evolve from the results of this study are authoritative in that they emanate from experts in their field with participant samples which are identified as typical. Their commentary should be noted and lead to change within the institutions concerned. The individual participants from the two universities noted their own experiences, feelings and apprehensions from a personal and pedagogic perspective. The data provided was mostly focused on problems and issues occurring generally or specifically, although they did mention a few ideas that they felt would help them personally in their task and be a help to others working in the same field. The majority of solutions providing an answer to research question four and also clear recommendations for practice were provided by the focus group. The whole idea of some structured professional development, either across the institution, or across the sector as a whole was felt to be a priority. Currently, it is noted as being varied between schools and faculties and even programmes of study depending on the partner institution.

The report undertaken by Whieldon for the HEA (2014), suggested that any higher education institution involved in transnational education and flying faculty should undertake a cross-institution audit of what is actually provided for staff development and gather, collate, consider, make recommendations and provide not only a corporate strategy but a practical structure for the quality-controlled implementation of that strategy. Without the appropriate preparation, strength of teaching ability, design and quality of bespoke materials, provision of student

experience and adaptability expected of many transnational flying faculty staff, the report noted that transnational programmes would not prosper long term.

Induction

A bespoke ‘Induction’ for staff participating in transnational education as flying faculty offshore is important preparation. The content needs to eliminate as many of the apprehensions raised as possible. Information, not only about the country and the host partner, but details from the foreign office and International Chamber of Commerce and other sources can assist in managing expectations. Experienced flying faculty staff should be recruited to assist at each stage of the development of additional members to the transnational team as mentors, trainers and points of contact.

Pre-delivery

Staff need to know more than the airline, departure/return date and the address of the hotel. Increased knowledge of the unknown and unexpected reduces fear and uncertainty and enhances confidence. In fact, a similar set of preparatory information for host-country staff and support staff as well as flying faculty is beneficial to the overall activity. Specific information on all modes of travel, passport requirements, visas, stop-overs, different currencies and exchange rates, prescription medicines, mobile phone limitations (unless one is provided by the institution) should be the norm. I developed a simple personal checklist for flying faculty for use pre-departure which could be amended and expanded as staff highlight additional information needed at post-delivery de-briefings. Additionally access to a cultural guide for each country involved is useful. Anonymised case studies along with some form of ‘Wisdoms and Experiences

Log' dealing with general issues with further access to information on specific countries and partners will allay many concerns.

The focus group felt that significant practical guidance was needed. Staff felt that they needed more than a travel guide. A *'Top Tips'* or *'101 things I wished I had known'* with a continual up-dating facility as more knowledge is gained along with a list of *'Do's and Don'ts'* was felt to be essential. The development of a generic training manual/staff handbook should be considered as providing staff with areas of support and signposting them to appropriate resources and useful as part of a training needs analysis. Consistent and structured training across the organisation rather than allowing diversification across schools and faculties using ad hoc procedures is essential. Guidance on leadership on offshore programmes should be considered as well as the idea of appointing a champion as a key figure to promote the whole process of staff development for flying faculty within the institution. If this were incorporated into the Professional Standards Framework, it would provide a more professional basis for those involved in working offshore.

<u>During-delivery</u>

A suggestion made by a number of participants is repetitive use of the same hotel. Lone staff who regularly work offshore, repeatedly with the same partner in the same area are less apprehensive when met with a hotel service team who are known to them. They can develop a rapport which provides useful knowledge in a variety of ways: facilities available, best mode of transport to and from the university, 'no-go areas' and best advice on 'what not to do'. Regular communication with UK campus nominated contact at designated times

is important as is a point of contact for emergencies at weekends and evenings – not forgetting to take account of the time difference. Flying faculty staff should not feel as one participant said that they felt the UK campus adopted the approach: ‘out-of-sight, out-of-mind’.

From a teaching perspective: on-going reflection during delivery of each session is useful: what works and is good practice; what needs development; what needs changing. If access to on-line materials from the UK campus are needed by the students for their studies, research or completion of assignments, regular checking of IT facilities needs to be undertaken.

Post-delivery

In addition to a carefully designed Induction, pre-course delivery preparation and support systems to assist at the point of delivery of the programme, there are key practical recommendations to assist staff post-delivery. Through a de-briefing exercise or standardised staff report, any staff experiences, occurrences, events during a particular visit can be added to the ‘Log’ of information available for future visits. Linking experiences with professional development, reward and recognition is important for the future. Any successes should be publicised and celebrated. Experience gained from delivery of the programmes can result in positive changes in teaching practices when back in the UK and this should be tracked in some way.

5.10 Summary and options for future research and development

Whilst some of the literature highlighted some of the problems and concerns re: flying faculty, this study noted a lack of focus by UK higher education institutions

on the needs of this discrete group of educationalists demonstrating a tendency to treat their developmental needs as of little consequence. Yet data indicates that the sector continues to expand at a significant rate. If this is so, then the number of staff experienced in working as flying faculty who are able to provide a quality educational product at point of delivery becomes even more critical and not an area which can continue to be either ignored or given scant attention. It is a fact that we live and study more than ever in a global society, yet many of the participants involved in this study were quite cynical about the whole *'internationalization agenda'* put forward by many higher education institutions describing it as *'getting more students in'* to counter falling numbers in UK recruitment.

For some institutions, the use of flying faculty is seen as too costly, by others as a best-costing model. A comment by one of the interviewees LH from University B was that offshore delivery was still very high on the agenda for the university, but the intention was to gradually move to just using local tutors as it was cheaper and could give a better financial return. Are we therefore now at the commodification of education stage? Is it no more than a product? As such, does this mean there is a move from a 'Harrods model' of high-end exclusive products, once aligned to our UK universities' degree studies, to the 'Tesco model' – 'pile them high; sell them cheap' (Corina, 1972) attributed to Jack Cohen, the founder of Tesco supermarket stores? While the Tesco model was successful short term, the company had to fight hard strategically to re-build their reputation.

While the question of identifying the challenges and opportunities for staff has been answered and staff have articulated clearly their opinions from their perspective, the questions still needing to be asked are:

- Do higher education institutions recognise that flying faculty really need additional skills and attributes to be successful?
- Do higher education institutions acknowledge that some training or preparation, formal or informal, should be provided for staff working as flying faculty?
- Do resulting staff experiences (good or bad) as flying faculty result in professional learning and development of staff?

This study has been undertaken within specific confines. Whilst it may be a study based only on a sample and therefore not generalisable, the additional wide-ranging demographic of the focus group negates this criticism to some extent. Future work should take the resultant and concluding aspects of this study into account. It is important for institutions to acknowledge the gap that there is in provision of structured development for flying faculty staff and which to date has not been a consideration. Policies and procedures need to change.

Jack Welch CEO, General Electric noted in the firms' Annual Report (1999 p.4) that: "If the rate of change inside an institution is less than the rate of change outside, the end is in sight". Whilst coming from a business perspective, this is a message that higher education needs to absorb. It is obvious that those key stakeholders who are designing, developing, delivering the product and providing optimum 'customer care' should be well prepared and supported to deal with this innovative and dynamic pedagogical experience. I suggest that the findings support the view that there has been insufficient practical change to deal with the relatively recent transformation in the delivery of academic programmes to an expanding international cohort offshore.

What is surprising is that despite all the challenges and apprehensions faced, there are academics who still want to work as flying faculty and see it as an opportunity for personal and professional development.

It is clear that the infrastructure and/or support for transnational education and flying faculty is varied. A report (Whieldon, HEA, 2014), suggested that any higher education institution involved in transnational education and flying faculty should provide not only a corporate strategy but a practical structure for the quality-controlled implementation of that strategy. Without the appropriate preparation, skills, design and quality of bespoke materials and adaptability expected of many transnational flying faculty staff, the report noted that transnational programmes would not prosper long term.

To improve transnational education and the position of flying faculty requires a 'champion' with enough seniority and credibility to drive change and provide support to ensure consistency of delivery and quality. At every level, the necessary development should not be ad hoc. Support at home is an absolute necessity to ensure success abroad. The management of programmes and relationships takes time, consideration and communication. So often the academic flying faculty is the one on the ground to provide this. They are often the sole representative of their university during their short stay. As a result of their experience they can provide an opportunity for expansion and support further growth in the areas of curriculum development, material delivery and partnership activity as well as global student experience. This can only happen through review and a re-alignment of perception of flying faculty, not as an 'add on' but as a key for the future (HE Global 2016, 5.16-5.19).

The Observatory on Borderless Education Report (2011) noted that when discussing transnational education, the motivation for delivery of offshore programmes now comes from consumer choice, brand reputation and significantly student experience. Interesting commentary, since the success is based on the ability of the flying faculty tutor. If higher education is changing to be perceived as a business, then surely, we should note the lessons learned historically. ‘The trouble with the future is that it usually arrives before we are ready for it’, Arnold Glasgow, USA businessman (undated).

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Case Study: **Appendix A**

Extract: Good Practice in Offshore Delivery: A guide for Australian Providers, prepared for the International Education Association of Australia, 2008

Onshore, Gordon is considered a popular teacher with most students in his classes. He knows everyone's names. He is funny, moves about a lot and often makes humorous asides.

Rather than deliver lectures, Gordon expects students to do the reading and learning activities set out in the subject guide, then he questions them on what they have learned. Sometimes he asks rhetorical questions. Sometimes he asks questions with very complex answers that he goes on to answer himself.

He also fires questions at unsuspecting students and often dramatically asks, *'Why?'* or *'How?'* when someone offers an answer. He also demands students to *'Give an example!'* every time he introduces a new concept or model. If students answer incorrectly, he might say, *'And what planet are you on?'* or he might look blankly at them and say, *'Moving right along …'* No one is offended by these remarks and most students are willing to *'have a go',* despite the possibility of being laughed at. He doesn't mind if a student being asked a question says something like, *'Not today, Gordon, please!'*

Offshore during his one-week burst mode delivery in China, Gordon behaves in the same way. He thinks the students are quiet but receptive and assumes that students understand him. Gordon tells an Australian colleague, *'I ask, 'Any questions?' every so often, and there never is. The students just love my dynamic teaching style'.*

A Chinese teacher sitting in on his class offered another interpretation of the students' silence: *'To begin with, only a few students can understand him. He ranges away from the words and ideas on his PowerPoint and the students never know where they are up to.*

He speaks quickly and uses so many Australian references—I mean, I have been there, I know some of the references—but the students are lost. For example, in the last class, he said one student had won the Trifecta when she got top marks for three tests in a row. She didn't know what he meant and spent ages figuring out how to spell it and what it meant.

When he asks students questions, they don't know what he expects them to say. They are all nervous to give responses, as the last student who did—well, Gordon didn't understand what she said and everyone was embarrassed. Really, many students believe he is a bad teacher—that he doesn't know anything because he doesn't tell them anything—just asks questions!'